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Misunderstanding motivates understanding

As the guests of honor, China's delegation of 50 writers went to this year's Frankfurt Book Fair to share stories about contemporary culture and urban life with German publishers and readers who are stuck in the East's past.

Even these new tales are sure to lose something in translation. But the misunderstandings and presumptions that result cannot quench the desire for communication.

As the president of the Goethe Institut China said, "Misunderstandings are never bad when they motivate one to understand."

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Law to compensate victims of official brutality

By Zhao Hongyi

The government is preparing to regulate its compensation practices after the People's Congress, the country's legislative body, passed the Law of the People's Republic of China on State Compensation October 27 in Beijing.

The newly approved law requires the government to award monetary compensation for injuries and deaths caused by public servants.

An inmate subject was "abused to death" earlier this year in Yunnan Province. The local police said he died while playing hide-and-seek (duo mao mao) with the other inmates: the absurdity of the claim sparked the fury of many netizens.

An investigation proved the man had been abused. His attackers were sentenced and imprisoned, local police and their co-conspirators were criticized and the man's family was compensated.

The new law further defines state compensation. Concerning the use of force on inmates, the new law shows relatively little tolerance. It states that jailed suspects and prisoners have the right to seek government compensation for wrongful injury and death.

Abuse is still a reality in some of the country's prison systems, either at the hands of police or other detainees.

Detained suspects who are found to be not guilty are also required to be compensated.

It also allows convicted prisoners the ability to subtract their days in jail from the ultimate duration of their sentence. Those who would serve less than one year in prison after the subtraction will be allowed to carry out their sentence in detention rather than be transferred to prison.

The new law also rolls medical care and recovery costs into the compensation package. Victims have the rights to claim for these costs and wages, which are set to the national

average, but may not exceed five times the previous year's income.

Government compensation offices must submit the application within seven days, and the financial authorities must disburse the money within 15 days. Victims would be compensated within 22 days if entitled.

The new law also includes compensation for mental anguish, but the amount of compensation must be awarded by a judge on a case-by-case basis.

"The new law shows the government is serious about respecting human rights," Professor Ma Huaide, from the China University of Political Science and Law, said. "It requires policy executors to pay more attention to their actions, especially the police."

"This time, the law changed the former state compensation from emphasizing illegal practices used by public servants to how the victims of those actions should be compensated," he said.



Reporters touring Beijing to conduct post Olympic research. Photo by Venus Lee

Foreign press back for post-Olympics visit

By Venus Lee

A delegation of six members from the Western media visited this week to learn how the city has changed since the Olympics. It was the first government-organized tour for foreign journalists since the Games.

The journalists from Australia, Spain and New Zealand visited Beijing Development Area (BDA), the Olympic Green, the Urban Rail Transit Command Center, Shichahai Sport School, 798 Art Zone, Cuigezhuang Village, the electric car and bus's charging station and the headquarters of local search giant Baidu.

Lenda Korpmaal, a financial writer for *The Australian*, was very interested in BDA's location in the southeast, which is home to 2,300 international corporations, 70 percent of which are in the service industry.

When she heard employment in BDA is expected to expand from 70,000 to 150,000 in the next 10 years, she said: "The demand for talent is striking, but Beijing has an unparalleled advantage in human resources because of its numerous universities around the town."

The news office of BDA said the area is home to 2,000 foreign workers who are concentrated in research and development.

"It was also interesting to learn some of the other changes brought about by the Olympics, such as the traffic management system where drivers' road time is restricted by their plate numbers," Korpmaal said. "What's more, Beijing's air quality has been a lot better this year, and some of that may be due to the changes implemented during the Olympics."

Michael Burgess, a sports editor at Television New Zealand, wanted to know how the sports venues and stadiums have been used since the Olympics, and the state of the nationwide fitness program.

His visit to the Olympic Green, Shichahai Sports School and his talks with morning exercisers at the Temple of Heaven satisfied that curiosity.

"Most sports venues in former Olympics hosts have not been adequately used. It will take time to fully use the Games areas: no city can reinvent itself overnight. But I'm sure it will happen," he said. "My worry was that the Bird's Nest and Water Cube would have been abandoned. But the crowds on the Olympic Green showed just how popular they remain."

Noelia Tobias, reporter from TV5 Spain, was investigated how social infrastructure affects the city's youth. "This is my first visit to China and I am impressed with how well the subway works. I found people here have a good standard of living – higher than in many Western cities," she said. "I interviewed many young people, and they were kind, passionate and able to communicate well in English."

"I think they are the best representatives of the city's image," she said.

Festival kids help to spread foreign language use



Students from Beanstalk International Bilingual School give locals a chance to practice their foreign language skills. CFP Photo

By Venus Lee

The two-day Beijing Foreign Language Festival, held at the Working People's Cultural Palace on the east side of Tian'anmen Tower, drew 40,000 visitors last weekend.

Foreign students from a dozen middle and primary schools came to play instruments and sing and dance at the opening ceremony of the festival. Almost 30 students from Beanstalk International Bilingual School unveiled a 30-meter-long painting at the ceremony.

"I painted three hands in different colors on the canvas to show how people from all over the world come together in Beijing," said Ieva Dimsaite, 11, a Lithuanian girl who has lived in the city for five years.

Danielle McCraine, an American

mother, said she was proud of her 7-year-old daughter Laura's Peking Opera performance at the ceremony. "This is her second time to participate in the festival, and her performance was great. Her Chinese is standard and fluent," she said.

"My school has participated in the festival for seven years including this one," said Mike Weeks, the principal of the school. "The festival not only gives people in town a chance to practice their foreign languages, but also gives our kids a chance to show their bilingual skills and strengthen their confidence."

The festival also opened a foreign language-talent recruitment zone to facilitate the talents to consult some overseas-funded enterprises, foreign language training schools and volunteer and service organizations about their manpower

requirements.

The festival has been held every year since 2002 as part of the Beijing Speaks Foreign Languages Program, which also includes Beijing Foreign Languages Weeks, 701 community-level foreign language training centers, 433 community foreign language corners and a volunteer team. In 2006, the program was named as an Olympic cultural treasure by the International Olympic Committee.

According to the event's organizing committee, the number of bilingual Beijingers rose from 3.12 million in 2002 to 5.5 million in 2008: 35 percent of the total permanent residents. A total 830,000 English signs at public sites were replaced or altered, and menus in 1,300 restaurants have been standardized since the program launched in 2002.

Victim of entrapment gets his apology, freedom



Sun Zhongjie in tears when the Shanghai government admitted it wronged him.

CFP Photo

By Han Manman

A young driver who hacked off the tip of his finger to protest his innocence was in tears when the Shanghai government apologized and released him earlier this week.

The driver, Sun Zhongjie, 19, is a migrant worker from Henan Province. He was detained two weeks ago in Shanghai when police declared that his offer to give a stranded stranger a lift was equivalent to "operating an illegal taxi."

The case was slammed by the media and on the Internet, pushing the government to bow to pressure and start an investigation. The findings forced Pudong to admit that it had been entrapping innocent motorists as part of its strategy to crack down on illegal cabs.

Long overdue apology

In a press conference Monday, the Pudong New Area government admitted it had been entrapping drivers as part of its crackdown strategy. It apologized for its attempts to bait unlicensed taxi drivers.

"We, as a district government, must admit our mistake and apologize to the media and the public," local government chief Jiang Liang said.

"An apology is not enough. One must pay the price if one makes mistakes," Jiang said, adding, "The government cannot ensure that it never makes mistakes, but it must ensure that it is honest."

An investigation found that a local transport supervision team was using "improper methods" to collect evidence, officials said. The finding was contrary to an October 20 statement by Pudong urban management authorities, who denied entrapping the van driver.

Jiang said that findings misled the

public and media, and those responsible would be punished under the law.

In a similar event, the Minhang District government announced this week it would return a 10,000 yuan fine it had collected from Zhang Hui, a man also falsely accused of operating an unlicensed taxi.

"Sun's case was only the tip of the iceberg," Hao Jinsong, Sun's lawyer, said. "A number of individuals are hired to help law enforcement agencies set up entrapments. It is similar to organized crime, as they frame the drivers and extort a huge amount of money by making up stories and covering the truth."

Hao said this case is not in the end of his involvement. "Someone must make them pay," he said.

Bleeding in protest

Two weeks ago, Sun made headlines when he chopped off his pinky finger to protest his innocence after police accused him of operating an unlicensed taxi.

He was arrested minutes after giving a lift to a man who forced him to stop by standing in the middle of a narrow road on October 14.

He told Sun he was traveling to a nearby cement factory but there were no buses and he could not find a taxi. Without waiting for an answer, the man climbed in beside Sun, who took pity on him and drove off.

Sun recalled, "I started the car. Minutes later, at an intersection, a van came up and stopped in front of me."

The man leapt out of his vehicle, tossed a 10 yuan note towards him and ran off. Sun then discovered that the vehicle in front of him contained traffic inspection officials cracking down on unlicensed taxis.

They took Sun's mobile phone and

ordered him to sign a confession that he was operating an unlicensed taxi, but Sun refused.

Only after they refused to allow him to go to the toilet did Sun finally sign the confession. That evening he cut off the tip of his little finger and informed the local newspapers of his case.

The report sparked outrage and garnered nationwide sympathy for Sun, who had arrived in Shanghai only two days before the incident to take a construction job. The entrapment case topped a netizen-compiled list of public incidents that had damaged government credibility during the first nine months of the year.

A lesson learned?

"The handling of the case has given local governments a good lesson on how to follow the law," said Zou Rong, a professor at East China University of Political Science and Law.

"The administrative departments will be more cautious in future law enforcement procedures and the legal interests of the public will be better protected," he said.

According to Wang Yukai from China National School of Administration, the government's duty is to ensure order. But if the government puts itself above the law, it will cause more disorder and destroy its credibility.

Wang said the Internet exposed administrative enforcement to public supervision, and this faceless watchdog will ensure it plays fair.

"Shanghai finally cleared me. It's not only my victory, but also the public's victory," Sun wrote in his blog Tuesday. He said his boss welcomed him back to work after the case, but that he would never again stop to help someone on the street.



The wholesalers in Qinghai province who sold skulls to Ding has been sentenced to 5 years in prison. CFP Photo

US man jailed for exporting human skulls

By Venus Lee

A Chinese American academic was sentenced to eight years in prison, fined 300,000 yuan and banished from the country for selling excavated human skulls to buyers overseas.

The 44-year-old US citizen Ding Wen was sentenced September 21 for illegal business practices by the Beijing First Intermediate People's Court.

"Ding's behavior was socially unacceptable. He not only desecrated the deceased, but his sales also disrupted and supported the market for illegal artifacts. His criminal character is a danger to society," Tao Wei, the presiding judge, said.

The Beijing Municipal Bureau of Public Security said Ding, who worked in Beijing as a consultant, sent more than 200 human skulls to the US, UK and France through express mail. He forged the customs papers, stating the skulls were actually toys or plastic models.

Ding earned 130,000 yuan after purchasing the skulls for 80 to 160 yuan each on the black market from November 2007 to April 2008, according to court records.

He was arrested last May while attempting to ship another 20 skulls to the US. Police found an additional 1,100 skulls in his home in Changping District. The skulls were at least 60 years old, and some dated back to 1840.

Ding said he started collecting the artifacts after purchasing several skulls with designs carved into them at the Panjiayuan Folk Culture Market. He later bought skulls from wholesalers in Qinghai Province and enlisted artisans to make carvings on them.

His arrest came after the US Federal Bureau of Investigation tipped off Chinese police last year, informing the Ministry of Public Security that Ding was sending the skulls to the US via express mail.

Ding's lawyer has already filed an appeal, claiming the sale of skulls is not illegal. "We believe that skulls are not commodity as there is no market for them ... My client has been convicted only on moral grounds," Zhao Yunheng, the lawyer, said.

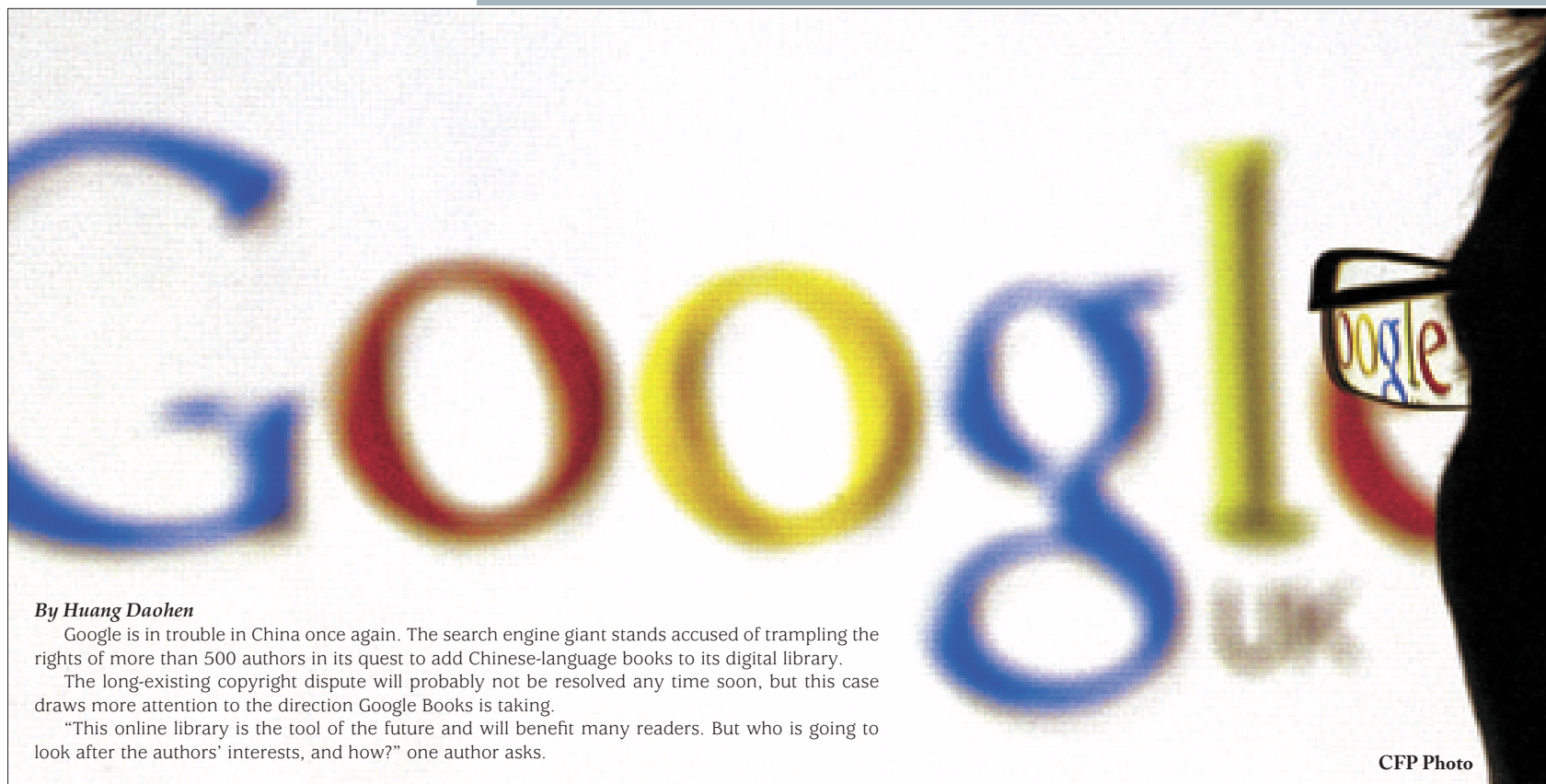
The court said he was convicted based on regulations governing the import and export of cadavers, which took effect August 2006. The regulations state that it is strictly forbidden to buy or sell corpses or to engage in corpse-related commerce.

His appeal will be heard by the Beijing Higher People's Court in two to three weeks.

"It seems unlikely that the court will overturn the original verdict," the lawyer said.

Google's library a copyright hell

When all is scanned and done, where is the archive headed?



By Huang Daohen

Google is in trouble in China once again. The search engine giant stands accused of trampling the rights of more than 500 authors in its quest to add Chinese-language books to its digital library.

The long-existing copyright dispute will probably not be resolved any time soon, but this case draws more attention to the direction Google Books is taking.

"This online library is the tool of the future and will benefit many readers. But who is going to look after the authors' interests, and how?" one author asks.

CFP Photo

Event

CCTV report triggers copyright dispute

The new dispute came to attention October 13 when CCTV's Morning News reported that the Google China Digital Library was suspected of having committed large-scale copyright infringement in scanning Chinese books.

A total of 18,000 books from 570 Chinese authors, including government officials, have been scanned without authorization, it reported.

Though the segment ran less than a minute, the accusations attracted nationwide attention and provoked editorials and debates.

The drama got a second wind Monday when the Web site of the *People's Daily* said Google had launched a malicious revenge campaign in response to the site's coverage of the controversy.

Wang Yin, an editor at the *Daily's* site, says the editorial department began receiving calls Tuesday morning from readers who could not reach the site from Google. Search matches related to the *People's Daily Online's* coverage of the Google story turned up warnings that "This site may contain malicious software that could harm your computer."

Wang says there was no malware on the site, and that the block was due to the site's coverage. The *People's Daily Online* began featuring stories on the issue on October 21 and had added a special page for the topic.

Google denied the allegations. An official with Google China told Xinhua that the malware warning is generated automatically and aimed to halt the spread of bad software.

Search results have returned to normal as of Tuesday.

Authors

Writers want inclusion, compensation

Many authors have complained and are prepared to file lawsuits. Chen Cun, a Shanghai writer who found 38 of her books on Google, is among them.

"Google never bothered to notify me or the Chinese authorities. They should have at least told me my works were going online," Chen says.

"Whether you are a small company or big company you still have to respect the authors," he says.

Dissatisfaction aside, others believe the digital library can work and benefit the world – provided it is complete.

"An ever-increasing percentage of people do things primarily, if not exclusively, online," says Yang Gengsheng, a novelist and high school teacher in Zhejiang Province. Given that trend, people's reading habits are bound to veer from paper to digital," he says.

Yang says if there is an online library with a perfect, searchable index, no author would want to be left out. "Many people would never find these books if they couldn't search their content online," he says.

"A complete searchable online index of the full text of millions of books is no doubt of historic significance," but any index less than complete may unfairly bury the works of some authors, he says.

"The quality of the library itself worries me more than any alleged copyright infringements."

Reactions

Google

Plan compensation

That Google stands accused of copyright violation is nothing new. Its book-scanning project has met with considerable resistance in many countries since it began in 2004: many insist it violates intellectual property rights.

In the US, Google suggested a settlement. Associated Press reported that Google would pay \$125 million (850 million yuan) to create a Book Rights Registry where authors and publishers can register works and receive pay. However, many authors opposed it, claiming it violated anti-trust and copyright laws.

The Mountain View search giant is in the final stages of reaching a settlement with two US copyright organiza-

tions, and a US court may issue a final ruling on November 6.

In China, Google proposed two solutions for its complaints. One is to offer authors who apply for compensation before June 5, 2010, at least 410 yuan per book and 63 percent of future revenue generated by online reading; the other is to file a lawsuit before January 5, 2010.

But Google China recently said the company may have to offer a better settlement.

"We will listen carefully to everyone's concerns and will work hard to address them," the company said in its statement. It said the goal of Google Books "remains bringing millions of the world's difficult-to-find, out-of-print books back to life."

Authority

Courts an option

Authorities have stepped up condemning Google.

The China Written Works Copyright Society, a government-affiliated group in charge of copyrights, posted a notice on its Web site calling on authors to "bravely stand up and adamantly defend their legal rights."

The society wants authors to check Google Books to see if their works have been scanned and distributed without compensation, and to contact them if they have.

"Google's infringement on (the rights of) Chinese authors is most serious," Zhang Hongbo, deputy director-general with the group, told the *Beijing News*.

"They should first ask per-

mission from the authors, then pay and only after that use their works," he says.

Wang Danluo, an official with the society, says Google's response to the accusations has been neither clear nor satisfying.

"First of all, they still have not admitted that they are infringing on anyone's copyright," she says. "We want Google to admit its infringement, apologize and authorize a formal negotiator to discuss compensation for the authors."

Wang says nearly 80 authors have contacted the society and entrusted it to win them a fair settlement. "We are still debating whether or not to take legal action, but it's an option," she says.

Is the West afraid?

Country sent inspectors to scout for looted relics

Is the West nervous that China has sent a team of inspectors to its part of the world to catalogue looted national treasures? *Global Times*, an English paper run by the *People's Daily* Group, answered "yes" in a cover story on October 22, although the government has said it does not mean to seek the recovery of those relics.

The government has sent a team of artifact hunters to nearly 50 countries to track down thousands of treasures looted by foreign armies 150 years ago.

The experts will scour museums, libraries and private collections in Britain, the US, France, Japan and elsewhere to photograph and catalogue what was taken from the Old Summer Palace, or Yuanmingyuan, after British and French armies sacked it in 1860 then picked through what remained in 1900.

"We hope to build a complete database of the Old Summer Palace's lost relics so we can have a clearer view of the historical royal garden, then known as the Garden

of Gardens, before it was looted and burnt," Chen Mingjie, the director of the imperial garden, said.

He was not sure how many treasures had been pillaged from the palace, a summer pleasure ground for emperors in the 18th and 19th centuries. "Based on our rough calculations, about 1.5 million relics are housed in more than 2,000 museums in 47 countries," Chen said.

"We have clarified that this is an attempt to document rather than to seek the return of those relics. We do hope some previously unknown relics might surface and some might be returned to our country during our investigation."

(The Times)



A team of experts were sent abroad to catalogue the treasures looted from China.

CFP Photo

Museums' reaction

A few museums in Europe were compelled to respond to the news story, with two UK museums saying they have nothing to hide.

"We understand it is about archiving and documentation. We would be happy to have any discussion with anyone who comes forward. But we have not been contacted by anyone at this point," a British Museum

spokesperson said.

A spokesman for London's Victoria and Albert Museum said they had not yet received any requests regarding objects from the Old Summer Palace: "Should there be inquiries, the museum would be happy to facilitate research."

An article in *The Times* last week reported, however, that the British Museum is very concerned

that China may take advantage of this large-scale overseas search for relics to recover national treasures, because according to UNESCO's 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, museums must return cultural relics to their original owners.

French museums seldom voice an opinion about the international search for cultural relics, but their attitude is clear: they intend to hold on to what they have.

Last February, at a Paris courtroom during a hearing to determine the rightful owner of bronze animal heads looted from the Old Summer Palace, a *Global*

Times reporter in the gallery heard the lawyer for Pierre Berge – who owned the pieces – say the heads of major French museums were very nervous about the possible outcome of the lawsuit.

They were afraid that if the decision were detrimental to their hold on Old Summer Palace artifacts, their collections of Chinese relics would be in danger.

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Moderately easy monetary policy still works

By Huang Daohen

Is the current monetary policy too lenient? Should the government reform the financial sector to answer global financial restructuring? The answer is what observers and experts across the world are dubbing the country's role in financial market.

On Tuesday, economists, entrepreneurs and officials attended the 2009 Golden Qilin Forum, organized by the Sina.com, at the Beijing Kerry Center to weigh in on the country's pro-growth policy.

Apparently works, and it is here to stay.



Edmund Phelps

Yuan reform benefits all

Reforms of the exchange system are meeting long-term targets, Edmund Phelps, an American economist and the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences, said.

The exchange rate has often been a flashpoint for US criticism of China. But Phelps says a stronger yuan will only hurt the US.

If China loses its share of the US market due to yuan appreciation, its economic growth will slow. But it will not help to reduce the trade deficit, he said.

In fact, as US manufacturers are moving their factories into China to cut costs, US customers still be importing products from China – just from a different brand.

The US has a more important stake in yuan reform, he said. “For China and the US, it's better to cooperate and negotiate than not talk.”

The government abandoned its policy of pegging the yuan to the US dollar in 2005. The currency's exchange rate against the dollar has risen close to 10 percent since then.

Li Yining

A policy that works

The country's current easy monetary policy should continue for at least another half a year, said Li Yining, a professor of economics at Peking University, who addressed the forum.

“Although the Chinese economy has been showing signs of recovery, the fundamentals of growth are still not solidly in place,” Li said, adding that economic growth remains driven by government investment.

Inflation unlikely

“Recently, some claim that the current easy monetary policy should be tightened, as increasing bank loans create fears of inflation on the market, but bank credit is not the only indicator of inflation,” he said.

Oil prices, energy and farm products are also important, Li said.

“The US economy is reviv-

ing at a relatively slow pace, so it will not drive the oil price up soon. The country also reported a bumper crop this year,” he said.

Li said a new decision on monetary policy should be postponed until next year's annual meeting.

Adjust the credit structure

Li suggested that the government should conduct microeconomic research to guarantee proper stimulus measures in different regions and industries.

Many small- to medium-sized companies are still struggling to get loans as banks are unwilling to assume the risk. “Activating these companies and creating more job opportunities plays an important role in stimulating domestic demand,” he said.



Talking about trade



Gary Locke led the American delegation.

CFP Photo

US and Chinese officials are due to meet in Hangzhou in the 20th meeting of the US-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade.

The trade talks come just a couple of weeks before US President Barack Obama makes his first visit to China.

The Americans say these talks are an important opportunity to engage China at a very senior level on specific trade issues.

The US and China are engaged in several trade disputes.

US Commerce Secretary Gary Locke is leading the American delegation. The Chinese side is represented by vice premier Wang Qishan.

Locke signalled that energy cooperation was likely to be an important topic around the table.

US firms are seeking access to the potentially lucrative Chinese market for clean energy and alternative fuels.

China and the US are involved in a number of different trade disputes, but of course the politicians are seeking to play down their differences ahead of the meeting.

Asked about a recent US decision to impose tariffs on cheap tyres, Locke insisted that some of the cases that appear in the newspaper headlines represent only a small fraction of Chinese exports to the US.

(Agencies)

Social networks must localize to enter China, DMG says

By Han Manman

While the economic recession may have taken a bite out of world industries, the digital market and new media have seen substantial growth in China, Paul Beckley, vice president of DMG World Media Asia, said in advance of next month's Ad:tech forum.

Encouraged by that growth, international exhibition and publishing company DMG is launching a global forum in Beijing to discuss the latest online techniques, other new platforms, and to educate marketers and agencies about opportunities in the domestic market.

“China's digital and new media market is still developing – if you compare it to mature markets in Japan, the US and Europe. But it's developing very fast,” Beckley said.

The 3G revolution and social media are driving growth in China and around the world, he said.

“The world is watching social media. While Facebook has been doing quite well with building a good revenue model, MySpace is still struggling. I have also seen rapid growth in China's social media like Kaixin001,” Beckley said.

His optimistic attitude is due in part to China's netizen population, which grows dramatically every year.

That population has already surged to 338 million, with 155 million using mobile Internet, according to the latest report released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) in July.

“It's predicted that China's Qzone will surpass the growth of Facebook within the next 12 month,” Beckley said. There are 60 million photographs uploaded to Qzone every day in China. The video upload rate is growing as well.

“The fast growth and huge number of netizens pose another question for social media companies in China: how to find and reach the target market,” Beckley said. “The biggest challenge they have is segmentation – reaching the right people.”

As for the international social media entering the Chinese market, Beckley said localization is key.

“Many international social media sites want to enter China. Some have tried, many have failed,” he said. He said international social media has met similar resistance in other Asian countries.

“Coming out on top will be hard in China, Japan, Korea and in the Middle East. Most Japanese have never even heard of famous international social media sites like Facebook, so very few use it,” Beckley said.

Yahoo! was the most exemplary company for localization, he said. “Yahoo! has long been eager to enter the Middle East. By buying Maktoob, the largest social networking site in Middle East, they finally found an inroad,” he said. “That model can work for social media sites trying to enter China.”

Ad:tech Beijing will be held at the Beijing International Conference Center from November 17 to 18. The forum expects many international companies to join including HP and L'Oréal.

Showing off or innovation?

Stir over MBA exclusive class for second-generation rich

By Zhang Dongya

Sanyuan Foreign Languages School, a private school in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, has set up an MBA class for senior high school students. Its special curriculum and exorbitant tuition fees have again drawn the public's attention to the "second-generation rich."

Some people have developed a hostile attitude toward the moneyed class, but more than this, the issue has made people reassess the country's education system and the perks available to the few.



Private schools hoping to meet the needs of the second-generation rich have sprung up in recent years.

Photo provided by Xinmin Evening News



Sanyuan has a class for good behavior.

The first 11 students in Sanyuan Foreign Languages School's MBA class started their lessons on September 1. All of them were from well-to-do families, with parents hugely successful in fields such as real estate and mining, the *Chongqing Evening Post* reported.

Their curriculum varies from that of ordinary high school students': it includes studying the *Four Books and Five Classics*, a classic text on Confucianism; learning *changquan*, a type of martial art; and cooking lessons in practical education class.

The class was designed as a top-quality program for the international market. The school

began recruiting students in June, and decided to start holding lessons even with only three or four students. To the administration's surprise, about 30 students signed up.

They conducted interviews, with both the student and his or her parents present, then picked 11 students. Wang Jinsong, director of Sanyuan's international department, told *Chengdu Business Daily* the school gave more weight to the student-parent interview than the students' test scores.

Students were charged an annual tuition fee of 70,000 yuan for the specially designed curriculum. It is said to include

an opportunity for further studies abroad, with the aim of cultivating society's future "elites."

Sanyuan is not the first school to open an MBA class for high school students: there are others in various parts of the country that have created special curriculums and charge similarly high tuition fees.

This distinct education system reminds people of "quality-oriented education" in the 1990s, which aimed to foster students' holistic development and was markedly different from the traditional exam-oriented system. However, the steep tuition fees limited its reach to wealthy families.

Background

2nd-generation rich

The "second-generation rich" label originated in a talkshow broadcast by Hong Kong-based Phoenix TV last week. According to the program, this group refers to people born in the 1980s and whose family owns property valued at more than 100 million yuan. Most of the people in this group are children of the first batch of entrepreneurs who achieved success and amassed fortune after the founding of the People's Republic of China – the "first-generation rich."

The descendants of rich families have attracted much attention in recent years as the gap between the rich and the poor widened. It does not help that a number of serious traffic accidents this year – which made news headlines – were found to involve drivers from the second-generation rich, who treat the roads as their playground. Such incidents leave a negative impression: the children are seen as showy, overbearing and extravagant.

The education of the second-generation rich kids has also been thrown into the discussion. Some say they should restrain their spending to counteract their bad reputation, while others say they should go for whatever sort of education they can afford.

Facts show these children do get the best education in the country. They go to the best schools from primary school and most get opportunities to study abroad. This trend also reveals that the country's education system no longer meets their expectations and demands.

Most wealthy and successful parents do not expect their children to make it into the country's top universities such as Tsinghua and Peking University. So they instead emphasize holistic development and developing qualities like creativity and independence.

In recent years, private schools have sprung up hoping to meet the needs of the second-generation rich. So when ordinary high school students are hunched over complicated math homework, the MBA classes are learning more practical skills like how to bake a cake, how to invest in stocks and how to perfect their golf swing.

Recently, the Shanghai Youth Homeland Civil Society and the Relay China Youth Elite Association conducted a joint survey on the "second-generation rich" to learn more about their lifestyle. The report discovered these people did not like the label "second-generation rich"; they wanted to be called either "children of entrepreneurs" or "second-generation entrepreneurs" to correct negative impressions.

Comment

Height of utilitarianism

Education is a kind of investment, but to some rich parents, it simply seems like another business investment. The students spend a lot to learn few practical things. They might get what they want immediately, but it is a disservice to education in the long run. There are problems in the traditional education system, but the special classes for the rich have reached the height

of utilitarianism, which is a hidden danger to the further development of children.

– Long Minfei, critic

Might be an innovation

I have to say that the new classes targeting the high-end market serve as a big challenge to the traditional education system. People have worried about exam-oriented education for a long time, but no effective measures have been adopted to change the old system. So the

new classes can be regarded as an exploration of other possibilities for China's education system.

Also, the country's regulations allow private schools to be heavily commercialized. So there is no cause for much criticism of the rich "buying" special education for their children.

– Yang Jinxi, columnist

Need for open-mindedness

There is a widespread hostile attitude toward the rich in

the country due to the big gap between the rich and the poor. This also extends to the field of education. Some criticize the moneyed class and say "the rich are getting richer, the poor are getting poorer."

What we should do is to guarantee that access to public education remain fair. As for private education, we need to regard it with an open mind.

– Chen Li, commentator with Wenzhou Evening News

'World's best restaurant' chef here for book launch

By Wang Yu

ElBulli, named World's Best Restaurant the last four years by the prestigious *S.Pellegrino World's 50 Best Restaurants* magazine, shot to fame through its "creative cuisines." The restaurant, overlooking Cala Montjoi Bay in Catalonia, Spain, is only able to accommodate 0.4 percent of the people who make a reservation each year.

This week, its pastry chef and "ideologist," Albert Adria flew to Beijing to promote his latest book *Natura*. He hosted four food events on this trip and is planning more the next time around with his older brother Ferran, elBulli's head chef, whose mission is to make Spanish tapas better known worldwide.

Albert, 40, was born in the neighborhood of Santa Eulalia in L'Hospitalet, Catalonia. His parents instilled in him an interest in cooking, but it was Ferran who introduced him to the trade and passion.

At age 16, Albert decided he wanted to become a chef; he dropped out of school and joined elBulli's staff. After two years' training in different kitchen sections, he realized his greatest interest lay in pastry-making.

In 1997, Albert left elBulli in the middle of the season to start writing what would be his first book. *Los postres de elBulli*,

which came out in October 1998, has been awarded Best Confectionery Book at France's Perigieux gourmet fair.

At the end of that year, Albert started a "food laboratory" – elBullitaller – on elBulli's premises. It consisted of only a table, four books and two chairs. It soon grew and he looked for a new location in downtown Barcelona, where he could continue experimenting on new dishes.

Every year, elBulli serves around 8,000 customers, a fraction of the people on their waiting list. Last year, more than 2 million people requested a reservation.

During the six months the restaurant is closed, it's onto elBullitaller, where a team of chefs work on molecular gastronomy – a scientific discipline that studies the physical and chemical processes that occur while cooking. Their yearly mission: to come up with a new 30-course menu employing original food combinations and cooking techniques.

ElBulli is known as "the world's greatest in molecular gastronomy," but Albert does not agree with this title bestowed by the media.

"To me, there are only two kind of cooking: the good and the bad. All we did was use new materials, create new dishes and respect the food itself. But the thing is, if a reporter sees me washing a mushroom and using liquid nitrogen

for cooking, he may use a photo of the latter rush. That generates misunderstanding," he said.

During a press conference at Beijing's Instituto Cervantes this Tuesday, a documentary recounting elBulli's history was shown. The film chronicled the restaurant's departure from traditional to creative dishes.

"At first, we spent years making all the dishes found in Spanish cookbooks, then we gradually began making new creations. We copied a lot and also added our own touch. But tradition was the basic element," Albert said. "You make mistakes if you ignore it."

The Spanish chef has been introduced to at least 50 Chinese dishes by Dong Zhenxiang, lead chef and founder of Dadong Roast Duck restaurant. Albert said he hopes to draw inspiration from Chinese cuisine.

"Chinese cuisine is very different from Spanish cooking, but its mixing of flavors is what I hope to learn," he said.

There is no shortcut to becoming a great chef, Albert said, but stressed that listening to customers' comments helps a chef to grow. New and creative dishes need to win the diner's mind before it wins his stomach, he said.

"After all, we're not playing games in the kitchen but serving customers," he said.



Though Albert Adria has introduced new cooking techniques – such as the use of liquid nitrogen – the Spanish chef does not want technology to take precedence over the food's flavors.

Photo provided by Beijing Instituto Cervantes



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Cuba re-appeals for end to US embargo

By Zhang Dongya

The UN General Assembly is expected to vote on a resolution Wednesday condemning the US's 47-year-old embargo on Cuba. It would be the 18th successive year the assembly votes on the resolution.

Carlos Miguel Pereira Hernandez, the Cuban ambassador to China, presented Havana's appeal to the world body to end economic, commercial and financial blockades imposed by the US in 1960. The US enforced the embargo as a war measure based on the Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) after Cuban president Fidel Castro expropriated all US businesses when he came to power.

"Nothing has changed through the 10 successive US governments other than a tightening of this policy," Hernandez said.

The vote last year was 185 to 3, overwhelmingly supporting Cuba's appeal and continuing a trend that emerged in recent years. The "nays" came from the US, Israel and Palau.

The ambassador stressed that the embargo was not a bilateral issue between Cuba and the US. "The repeated extraterritorial

application of US laws and the persecution of legitimate interests of companies and citizens of third countries have had significant repercussions on the sovereignty of many countries," Hernandez said.

According to data from the Cuban embassy, as of December 2008, direct damages to the country as a result of the embargo surpassed \$96 billion (655.6 billion yuan). Hernandez said the US "deliberately designed to create hunger, illnesses and desperation within the Cuban populace."

The Barack Obama administration has adopted several new measures toward Cuba, including the elimination of restrictions on family visits for Cuban residents in the US and the elimination of restrictions on their remittances to relatives in Cuba. The new regulations took effect in September, six months after they were announced.

"I will say it was a big step for the present US government to adopt these measures. As for the end of the policy of embargo against Cuba, there is still a long way to go," Hernandez said.

He said Cubans would not cease appealing for the lifting of the embargo even as they go on



Because of the US economic embargo, Cubans have suffered very low wages.

Photo from xcar.com

with their lives.

This year, it is expected that a huge majority of UN members will vote to end the embargo.

The Chinese government believes the blockade against Cuba should be lifted as soon as pos-

sible, foreign ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said at a regular press briefing last Tuesday.

"The Chinese government has always upheld that all countries follow the aims and principles of the UN Charter and the norms of

international law, develop state-to-state relations on the basis of equality and mutual respect and conduct dialogue instead of confrontation, engage in contact and communication rather than blockade and sanctions," he said.

1st anniversary of French club for Chinese nationals

By Zhang Dongya

As many as 500 Chinese nationals, including 350 who studied in France, celebrated the first anniversary of Club France at Kerry Center Hotel recently.

The club was established by the French Embassy to promote professional opportunities and foster interpersonal relations among citizens who have studied or worked in France.

"What's a pity is that when the Chinese students finished years of study in France and returned, they soon lost contact with France," Herve Ladsous, the French ambassador, said. "That's why we established France Club - to help them maintain

contact with their schools and schoolmates, or to rebuild relationships."

Club members, who number 2,000, receive job announcements, share information through the club's bulletin board and can look up former schoolmates in the club's directory.

The club has ties with several French businesses in China, including Air France and DCT Wines, an importer and distributor of French wines. Some of its new partners are The French Chamber of Commerce in China and Flo Beijing, a French restaurant in town.

There are some 2,000 French-owned companies in China, which employ 300,000 people. They are

expected to be the main source of jobs for students returning from France.

According to data from the French Embassy, since the late 1990s, more than 40,000 Chinese citizens have been educated in France, the second most popular destination for Chinese students next to the UK.

"State universities in France will continue the policy of giving free tuition to attract overseas students. Meanwhile, private universities offer competitive fees compared to universities in Europe, such as the UK," ambassador Ladsous said.

He said the exchanges in higher

education between countries play a big role in diplomatic relations. When he took his post in China three years ago, Ladsous said former French premier Dominick De Villeperpan told him one of the indexes by which to assess his performance as an ambassador is the number of students who choose to study in France. "I still need to do more and do better," Ladsous said.

Club France has also reached out to members in cities such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and Tianjin, with events like lectures and socials.

Considering the wide variety of industries its members are engaged in, the club has orga-

nized specialized activities. In April, it set up a sub-branch in Tianjin for aviation and aerospace professionals. It also organized activities for those in the law and medical fields.

The club has also established connections with the Western Returned Scholars Association, the first and largest organization for Chinese nationals who studied overseas.

Chinese citizens who have either studied or worked as an intern or employee in France are invited to join the club by registering on its website clubfrancechina.org. So far, 6,000 have registered.



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The business of philanthropy

Charity stores assist, lift up impoverished communities

By Wang Yu

Who says you need tons of money to become a philanthropist?

The key factors needed do not come with a price tag: the desire to help others, a good idea and the will to make your plan happen. This has been demonstrated by some people who run charity stores and charity events in local communities.

The community shops sell at a low price items such as brand-name clothes and bags donated by the owners' friends, residents or complete strangers. Profits are then given to charity organizations that work with impoverished rural communities. In this way, the businesses serve as a bridge between charity organizations and people who want to share their resources.

At the charity events, the organizers do not simply pass around a box where you throw in a few bills: they display handicrafts made by women in poor rural areas to help the manufacturers expand their market.



Leslie Simpson, founder of Roundabout charity store in Shunyi, with children from an orphanage in Hebei Province. Photo provided by Leslie Simpson

Brand Nü idea of charity work

One warm afternoon in September, people gathered at Saffron restaurant in the Wudaoying Hutong for the opening ceremony of an extraordinary painting exhibition. Hanging on the walls of the restaurant's basement bar were 20 paintings made by Wang Hongfeng, a 36-year-old mentally disabled student at Beijing Huiling Community Services, an organization for people with learning disabilities.

Wang sat in one corner of the room accented with candlelight, staring at the guests – mostly friends of Saffron's owner Li Yang and the co-organizer Xiangzi – but strangers to him.

"It was Huiling's third exhibition of Wang's works and was the most successful. Ten paintings were sold, which earned about 8,000 yuan," Xiangzi said of the show that lasted a month. Sales were turned over to Wang and Huiling to be used in their future projects.

Back in Wudaoying Hutong, not far from Saffron, is Brand Nü: the first charity store in downtown Beijing owned by Xiangzi.

Born in the northeast, the 37-year-old shop owner moved to Canada in 1999 where he worked as a company executive, became a Canadian citizen and married a local. He returned to China with his family last year after his wife received a scholarship from a Beijing university. He found a job here as a TV fashion



A painting exhibition of Wang Hongfeng, a 36-year-old mentally disabled student at Beijing Huiling Community Services, was held at Saffron restaurant last September. The event turned out to be the most successful in the school's history. From left: Wang Hongfeng, Saffron's owner Li Yang, the event's co-organizer Xiangzi.

ion program producer.

"I felt so lucky to have found a good job, to have a happy family and to have had the opportunity to live abroad for about 10 years. So as a Buddhist, I thought maybe it was time that I do something for others," Xiangzi said.

However it was not until Xiangzi's wife heard a speech in April given by Wu Qing, the head of Rural Women School, a Beijing-based NGO that assists women in impoverished rural communities, that he decided to make a move.

"I was planning to open a charity store at that time and spoke to Wu about my desire for cooperation," Xiangzi said.

Three months later, a second-hand clothing and handicraft store called Brand Nü was born. Most of the clothes were donated by Xiangzi's friends, while hand-made items such as traditional baby shoes, cushions and wallets were made by students at The Rural Women School.

The price of tops ranged from 10 to 80 yuan; jeans were sold for 50 yuan no matter the brand. Besides money for the store's upkeep and 1,500 yuan, Xiangzi donates all the profits to the NGO.

Bridge between needs and resources

Xiangzi's counterpart in the expat community is Scotswoman Leslie Simpson who owns Roundabout, a charity store in Shunyi District.

Simpson's family moved here

in 2004 for her husband's job. "Initially, I was hesitant as it would mean selling my business in Scotland, which I had worked so very hard at building. This was quickly replaced with the thought that I would be able to fulfill my dream of helping children in need – and sooner than I had envisaged," she said.

As soon as she got to Beijing, Simpson volunteered full-time at a home for orphans with disabilities. She saw that the place received many product donations, but the staff had little time to sort through them.

The business also connects people in need to those who want to help. "We are in a unique position in that every day we speak to charities and find out their needs, and we also talk to international schools, embassies, foreign social groups – people who wish to raise funds and help. We act as a bridge between the two groups and the results are simply wonderful," Simpson said.

Mission greater than obstacles

Brand Nü has begun producing a line of Xiangzi's original

"Reinventing traditional styles adds value to products, which means we can pay more money to these women."

An exciting project is in the pipeline: a collaboration with students at the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, which involves holding a fashion show of redesigned second-hand clothes.

On the practical side of things, Xiangzi knows a shop that only earns 1,500 yuan a month is not sustainable. He quit his TV job when he put up the store. "Recently I began helping some friends produce TV programs and put up display shows. As the store matures, it will be time to earn money in other ways," he said.

As for Simpson, most of her profit is used to pay the trucks that deliver goods to faraway provinces. She has approached several large logistics companies for assistance, but so far, none have agreed to help. Registering Roundabout as an NGO in China would entice more corporate sponsorships, but that is a tough mountain to climb.

"But I'm not going to grumble too much because of the fantastic support from the Beijing community. I have a photograph on the wall at Roundabout. It's of a young woman who lives in extreme poverty. I look at her eyes and they are dead. There's not a glimmer of hope or life. I don't know this young woman and have never met her, but her photograph never fails to remind me of why I'm doing what I do," Simpson said.

I look at her eyes and they are dead. There's not a glimmer of hope or life. I don't know this young woman and have never met her, but her photograph never fails to remind me of why I'm doing what I do.

She opened Roundabout in October 2008 to give donation the proper sorting they need.

Like Brand Nü, people can drop off their donations at the shop; the staff sorts through the goods, then passes them on to various charities – Roundabout works with 27 charity organizations in the city. Items such as handbags, vases and decorations are sold in the store to pay for its operating expenses.

In the past six months, Roundabout has sent about 20 truckloads of goods to Inner Mongolia, Gansu, Qinghai, Shanxi, Shaanxi, Tibet, Yunnan, Sichuan and Chongqing.

designs, and its latest collection is wadded jackets for women produced by members of Rural Women School in Qionglong county, Hebei Province. Xiangzi provides all the materials and pays each sewer 50 yuan for every jacket – high pay in the domestic clothing-manufacturing industry.

The project is part of Rural Women's efforts to prevent suicides brought about by poverty. "Women in these areas are skilled in making hand-woven clothes, but they don't have a marketing arm to help them with promotion and distribution, and that is what I'm now doing," Xiangzi said.



Ten of Wang's paintings were sold, which earned about 8,000 yuan to be used in future community service projects.

Photos provided by Xiangzi

Challenge of finding kindergartens expected to ease in three years

By Annie Wei

With more and more people moving into Beijing, it is getting harder for both Chinese and expat parents to find good schools for their children. Private kindergartens are a particular challenge: the waiting list is a mile long and tuition fees can be debilitating.

According to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Education, 460,000 Chinese and foreign children were born in the city in the past three years, and 51 percent of the parents were not from Beijing.

The commission said it plans to build in the next three years 120 new public kindergartens, which are expected to enroll 36,000 children. The plan covers both the city center and the suburbs. To ensure the quality of teaching, many of the schools will be put under the supervision of top-grade schools.

However, different parents have different priorities – especially those who come from two cultures. Li Jingya, 26, a fashion designer married to a British national and mother of two, said her primary concern is teaching quality.

Her 3-year-old son Harry Miller goes to Ivy Bilingual School, which costs 18,000 yuan for six



Beijing No 1 Kindergarten opened its branch in Season's Park residential community at Chunxiu Lu, Chaoyang District.
Photo by Zhou Liang

months' half-day classes. "Harry's Chinese is better than his English right now, which is an important reason my husband prefers a school with good teachers that speak British English," Li said.

"It's also good that the school provides detailed information online," she said, adding that the school has activities like a monthly trip to a farm so Harry can enjoy

and appreciate nature.

But she said she also knows mixed-culture families that prefer to send their kids to locally run schools so they are immersed in Chinese culture.

The latter group of young parents may be happy to know that a branch of Beijing No. 1 Kindergarten opened in Season's Park residential community, near Dongzhimen, last

week. The school can handle a maximum of nine classes and 270 students. A public school, it charges a monthly fee of 1,160 yuan, strictly adhering to municipal regulations.

It accepts both locals and foreign children, and holds Chinese and English classes. The next admissions take place in March and September 2010. For more information, call 5851 1234 or 6272 8887.

Australia China Alumni Awards happening next Saturday

By Annie Wei

Recipients of the first Australia China Alumni Awards will be announced at a highly anticipated dinner next Saturday, which will gather Chinese alumni from leading Australian universities.

Over 150 alumni from various fields have been nominated for the awards, and the list of 40 finalists contains names of some of the country's top achievers. It includes some of China's wealth-

iest and its most creative, such as Shi Zhengrong, founder and CEO of Suntech Power, a firm working to develop sustainable, clean energy.

Since the 1970s, more than 700 AusAID scholarships have been awarded to outstanding early-career Chinese government officials. The scholarships, with an average value of AU\$100,000 (616,400 yuan) per student, cover all tuition fees and living costs.

One scholarship recipient, and a finalist in the Australia China awards, is Lu Xiaoping, deputy director of international cooperation at the Ministry of Agriculture and a graduate of the University of Queensland. Lu has been working on agricultural exchanges between China and Australia for more than two decades.

The awards organizer, the Australia China Alumni Association (ACAA), is a non-profit organi-

zation that helps Chinese alumni maintain ties with their Australian alma mater. Together with co-host CPA Australia, the ACAA hopes to establish an even broader alumni network and help promising Chinese students secure an opportunity to study in Australia. The Australian government and China-based Australian companies also support the awards.

For more information, check out austchinaalumni.org/awards.

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

Do you know a grocery store where I can get good quality smoked salmon? I've been to several groceries and all I found were raw salmon that's the stuff of sashimi.

The grocery section of IKEA furniture store sells good smoked salmon in more than one flavor. The products are imported from Scandinavia and cost 33 yuan per package on the average.

Can you recommend any good Halloween children's party? All I know are Halloween parties in clubs. It would also help if the tickets are not too expensive.

Try the Autumn Festival Barn Dance on October 31 sponsored by Care for Children, a British NGO. The event will be held at the NGO's center (1 Xiang Jiang North Lu, Chaoyang District). There will be food, family entertainment and plenty of fun for the kids, including a jumping castle and maze with surprises along the way for the young ones.

The Redbucks, a bluegrass band, will be joining the festivities, so expect a great concert and some country dancing. Costumes are welcome but not mandatory.

Tickets cost 30 yuan. For more information, call 15810966136.

(By Wei Ying)

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Lost in translation

China is the guest of honor

By He Jianwei

In 1450, Johannes Gutenberg invented the mechanical printing press only a few kilometers down the road from Frankfurt. Consequentially, the Frankfurt Book Fair dates back to the 15th century and is the world's biggest.

But in 1040, long before Gutenberg and his Bible, the Chinese inventor Bi Sheng had created movable type.

This year, China was the guest of honor at the fair from October 14 to 18. A huge wood type matrix was showcased in the China Theme Pavilion in recognition of the country's contributions to printing.

A delegation of about 50 Chinese writers attended the five-day fair.



China Theme Hall in Frankfurt Book Fair

Photos by He Jianwei

There were two legends about Germany several hundreds years ago in Mo Yan's hometown. One was "Germans have no knees. If you push a German, he will fall down and can't get up." The other was "Germans have forked tongue. If you want to learn German, you must cut your tongue."

Mo saw paintings done by Germans several hundreds years ago. In the paintings, the Chinese people squat on the trees, have their hair in a long queue and have a peaked mouth – like a bird.

The legends and paintings came from the imaginations of people from two vastly different countries. "If at that time, Germany had read Cao Xueqin's (1724-1764) novel and the Chinese had read Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's works, people wouldn't have such wild images," Mo said.

Although the imaginings of the Chinese and Germans centuries ago are no longer a secret, there are still misunderstandings. "Many foreigners have some knowledge of some aspects of traditional culture, but contemporary culture, urban lifestyles and the standard of living are lost on them," Juergen Boos, director of the fair, said.

But Western publishers are starting to notice the Chinese market. "More publishers have picked up the rights to Chinese works: there are more books

crossing international borders than ever before," he said.

In the bibliography of African, Latin American and other literature available in Germany, Chinese works used to number in the titles or 10 pages. "After this Book Fair, you will find more titles in that section," he said.

It is the same in the English-speaking world: most Chinese titles translated into German are classics and contemporary literature.

Suhrkamp Verlag, a German publishing house, is one of the leading European publishers of fine literature and is focusing on Chinese literature this year. It has already published 30 titles, introducing ancient Chinese philosophy and modern China.

"The novels about contemporary life and the troubles of modern China are popular in Germany. This month, we put out 4,000 copies of Mo Yan's *The Sandalwood Torture*. We usually publish about 10 titles for literature in translation, but Mo has many readers in Germany," Hans Joachim Simm, publisher of Suhrkamp Verlag and editor of the fair, said.

Many contemporary Chinese writers have a wide international following. Yu Hua met a French reader in Frankfurt. "He read my Chinese and he told me he read all of my novels, especially *a Blood Merchant*," Yu said.

Another popular writer for German readers is Li Er. German Chancellor Angela Merkel read Li Er's *Cherry On a Pole* in German and praised Li's book when she met the writer in Frankfurt.

But popularity does not equal understanding: some Chinese works are lost in translation.

"The Chinese version of my *Life and Death Are Wearing Me Out* is about 500 pages, but the German version is over 800 pages," translator Martina Hasse said. "I asked her if she added more to the novel than she didn't add one word," Mo said.

It is a common wonder for Chinese writers why their works are lost in translation. "The Chinese versions are thicker than the originals," Mo said.

Mo said his work is hard to translate into a foreign language because his works are related to rural life. The translator must understand Chinese rural life. Sometimes the Chinese readers don't understand the expressions," he said.

Hasse admitted that translating Mo's novels is a tough job. "There are many animals in Mo's work, and Hasse would have to find the right words to describe them," she said.

"Many foreigners have some knowledge of some aspects of traditional culture, but contemporary culture, urban lifestyles and the standard of living are lost on them."

– Juergen Boos, director of the fair

Writers' re

The Love Story of a

By Wang Zengqi, 2009, China Press, 25 yuan

"The book tells a love story between a young man and a rural woman. It was published in 1980. Many writers call it the political and social time, so I was astonished. It was a book talking about love and life."

– Liu Zhenyu, publisher of China Press, Phone 010-65251111

Heaven

By Wang Hai, 347 pages, China Press, 25 yuan

"Contemporary Chinese writers are good at depicting the changes in the past 30 years, but there are few novels about the changes in the past 30 years."



of 2009 Frankfurt Book Fair

“Misunderstandings are never bad when they motivate one to understand.”

– Michael Kahn Ackermann, president of Goethe Institut China

guesses he meant and wait for Mo’s corrections. “I went to a German village to see a boar, but when I gave Mo my painting, he told me it’s different in China,” Hasse said.

Chinese history is another mystery for the translators. When Marc Hermann translated Su Tong’s *Binu and the Great Wall*, he was curious why Su used the word “king” instead of “emperor.” The book is a retelling of the ancient legend of Meng Jiangnü bringing down the Great Wall with her tears.

“I thought the Great Wall that Meng brought down was built during the rule of Emperor Qin Shi Huang. And the reason Su changed ‘emperor’ to ‘king’ may have been that he thought it is closer to what Western readers would understand,” Hermann said.

He was wrong.

Su told him the ancient story that happened before Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) in the state of Qi, and the ruler of Qi would have been called a king in Chinese history.

There were more than 600 forums at the book fair, so it was a good chance for writers and translators to work through these misunderstandings.

In the opening ceremony of the fair, Mo quoted Goethe’s concept of international literature: words that extend beyond borders, comingle with cultures and accept differences. The result, Mo said, was the “amalgamation of thoughts and values.”

On October 17, a wooden bookshelf with 1,001 Chinese books was placed in the fair hall. Within two hours, German readers had taken all the books. Goethe Institut China collected 1,001 books donated by Chinese readers in the last seven months.

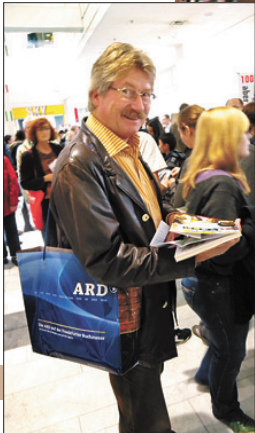
“The books were recommended by Chinese readers. We asked each to donate one book that Germans should read,” Michael Kahn Ackermann, president of Goethe Institut China, said.

In each book, there was a letter in German from the Chinese owner introducing the book and why they recommended it.

“Although German readers can’t read it, they can understand the desire for communication. The project is just a thread to connect people in the two countries,” he said. “Misunderstandings are never bad when they motivate one to understand.”



CFP Photo



A German reader attends 1,001 Book Project.



Chinese writers meet fans in Frankfurt. Photos by He Jianwei

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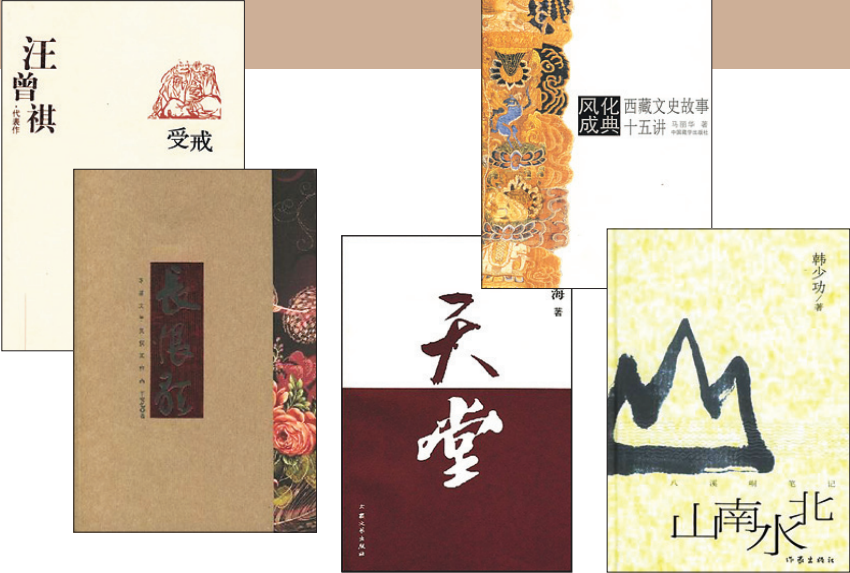
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d I'm Liu Yuejin
pp, Public Art
38 yuan
hinese writers
rural life,
els about the
o years. Some of

the novels describe only a gloomy life, but *Heaven* is different.”
– Wang Meng, author of *A New Arrival* at the Organization Department and former Minister of Culture
The Everlasting Regret
By Wang Anyi, 350pp, Nanhai Press, 22 yuan
“The character Wang Qiyao in the book is like a flickering light. In the period from 1946 to 1985, social changes were like erratic electric currents jolting the character’s life up and down.”
– Su Tong, bestselling writer of *Wives and Concubines*
Things Around
By Han Shaogong, 311pp, The Writers Publishing House, 26 yuan
“Under Han’s pen, Chinese rural

stories underwent tremendous changes, but there remains something unchangeable. If you want to know the current situation of rural life in China, what the peasants are thinking and doing and how Chinese intellectuals understand the villages, you can’t miss this book.”
– Fang Fang, president of the Hubei Association of Writers
Fifteen Stories about Tibetan’s Culture and History
By Ma Lihua, 361pp, China Tibetology Research Publishing Press, 58 yuan
“Our Tibetan people have a splendid history and culture. The book rediscovers the truth of history.”
– A Lai, a Tibetan writer and author of *Red Poppies*



The Love Story of a Young Monk, The Everlasting Regret, Heaven, Fifteen Stories about Tibetan’s Culture and History, Things Around (left to right)

Love will solve the world's problems

By Charles Zhu

Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the 1982 Nobel laureate for literature, has always been a mystery. His life was as magical as his novels. But some of that mystery might be unraveled by biographer Gerald Martin, whose new book *Garcia Marquez: A Life* (642pp, Alfred A. Knopf, \$37.50) makes a fantastic addition to Marquez's autobiography *Living to Tell the Tale*.

Marquez was born in 1927 in Aracataca, a small, mostly illiterate town in Colombia's Costa region: the banana zone. His father, an unrepentant womanizer, dragged his mother across Colombia in search of easy fortune. Little Gabriel was left to the care of his maternal grandparents. At age 22 in February 1950, he again went to his grandfather's house in the backwoods in the company of his mother – the most thrilling event in the novelist's life.

"Every single day of my life," Marquez recalled decades later, "I wake up with the feeling, real or imaginary, that I've dreamed I'm in that huge old house." He listened attentively to tales about the War of a Thousand Days between the Conservatives and Liberals and the 1928 massacre of workers at the banana plantation. He read Alexander Dumas and *A Thousand and One Nights*. He also watched as his grandfather soldered goldfish trinkets to sell in the neighborhood.

Marquez eventually returned to his parents, attended boarding school in Bogota and took great fancy in reading works of Joyce, Woolf, Faulkner and Proust in translation. He came to appreciate "the multiple dimensions of time itself." He met and fell in love with Mercedes Barcha, then age 9, and would propose to her 16 years later. He got a scholarship to attend an excellent college outside Bogota where he read Nicaraguan poet Ruben Dario of the early modernist movement. He spent years working as a journalist, becoming Colombia's first movie critic. When he finally finished *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, he and Mer-

cedes were too poor to pay for stamps and could only afford to send half the manuscript to the publisher.

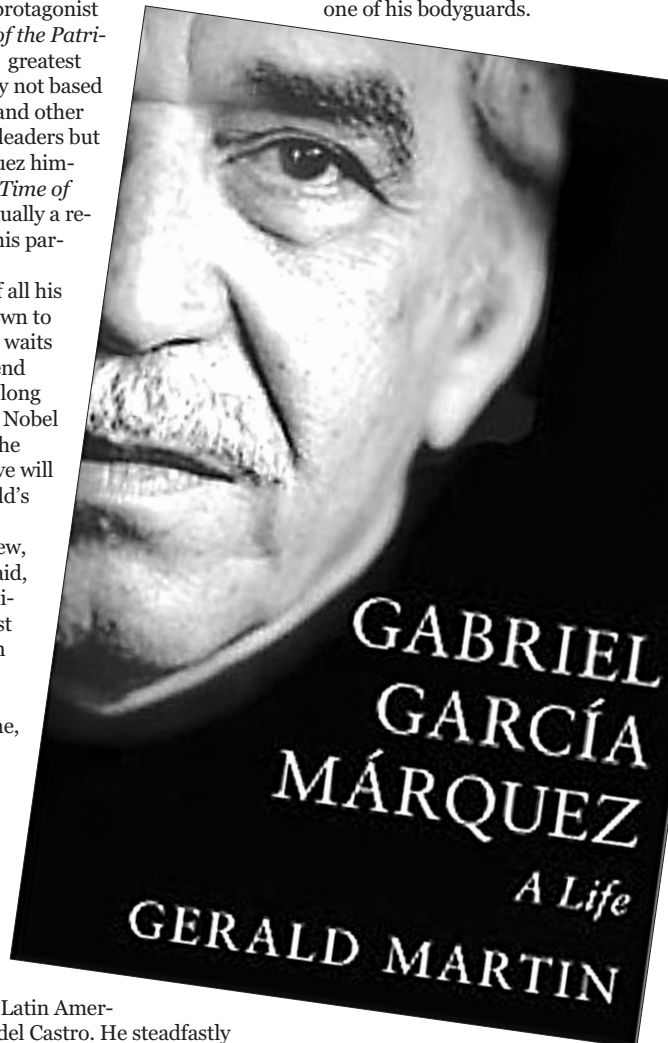
Marquez had taken to writing in his early 40s, able to turn the very reality of life into something dramatic, magical and thrilling. Martin says the story behind *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the personification of the Marquez family, and the protagonist in *The Autumn of the Patriarch*, Marquez's greatest work, is probably not based on Fidel Castro and other Latin American leaders but on Garcia Marquez himself. *Love in the Time of Cholera* was virtually a re-examination of his parents' marriage.

The theme of all his novels comes down to the solitude that waits for us all at the end of our lives. Not long after he won the Nobel honors in 1982, he claimed that "love will solve all the world's problems."

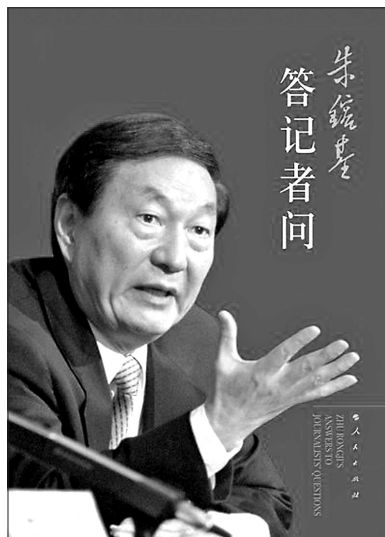
In an interview, Marquez once said, "I am just a mediocre notary." Just as Gerald Martin points out, "No matter how successful he became, he would never forget that he was nothing more than one of the 16 children of the telegraphist of Aracataca."

He made friends with leftist leaders of Latin America, including Fidel Castro. He steadfastly

supported the Cuban Revolution, based on shared convictions. However, that friendship aroused some criticism. Vargas Llosa, who once punched Marquez in the face over marital honor, has described Marquez as Castro's "lackey." On an occasion when Castro was visiting Colombia, Marquez, "the best known writer emerging from the third world," offered to be one of his bodyguards.



Former premier's book preserves his words



By Zhang Dongya

To most people familiar with the name Zhu Rongji, the former premier, he is remembered best for the annual press conference he held during his term. Even today, his comments remain

a topic of delight.

Last month, more than six years after Zhu retired, People's Publishing House published *Zhu Rongji in Press Conference* (457pp, 59 yuan), an archive of transcripts from every major press conference Zhu held while serving as premier and vice premier. It also includes lectures he gave overseas, some of which are appearing in print for the first time.

It sold nearly a million copies in the two months since its release, and continues to top the sales charts of online bookstores like dangdang.com and joy.com.

But why is the 81-year-old, who disappeared from the public eye after his retirement, once again so popular?

Some critics point to his special qualities which other officials lack: courage, wisdom, humor and vision.

Some of his answers to press conference questions remain inspirational after all this time. For example, when responding to corruption problems, he said: "In the war against corruption, we should beat the tiger before taking on the wolves. We should never show mercy to the tiger. To that end, let's make 100 coffins, includ-

ing one for me. In the worst case, I'll be destroyed with them. But what is that in exchange for the long-term stability and development of our nation and people's confidence in our cause."

Many government leaders and former leaders are publishing autobiographies. While Zhu wrote several academic books on management in the 1980s, he has always refused to write about his life. The 10 biographies of Zhu have all been written by others and were unauthorized.

Publisher Huang Shuyuan, president of the People's Publishing House, said readers can learn more about the status of the modern economy from the book. "The present financial crisis has much in common with that of 10 years ago, when Zhu was inaugurated as premier. His thoughts can be interpreted from his lectures and wise answers to the questions," Huang told the *Beijing News*.

In some ways, *Zhu Rongji in Press Conference* is "the first book that can be counted as his own."

Some see the book as a new vehicle for Zhu to re-enter the spotlight, which may even be more important than the book itself.

Bookworm book listing

Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following best sellers to *Beijing Today* readers.



When China Rules the World: The End of the Western World and the Birth of a New Global Order

By Martin Jacques, 576pp, Penguin Press HC, \$29.95

According to even the most conservative estimates, China will overtake the US as the world's largest economy by 2027 and will ascend to the position of world economic leader by 2050. In this far-reaching and original investigation, Martin Jacques offers provocative answers to some of the most pressing questions about the country's growing place on the world stage.



Brooklyn: A Novel

By Colm Toibin, 262pp, Scribner, \$25

Eilis Lacey has come of age in small-town Ireland in the years following World War II. Though skilled at book-keeping, she cannot find a job because of the miserable Irish economy. When an Irish priest from Brooklyn offers to sponsor Lacey to America, she decides she must go, leaving her fragile mother and her charismatic sister behind.



Red Mandarin Dress: An Inspector Chen Novel

By Qiu Xiaolong, 320pp, Minotaur Books, \$13.95

After 2006's *A Case of Two Cities*, Qiu's masterful fifth Inspector Chen mystery finds Shanghai terrorized by its first-ever serial killer. The murderer dresses his victims' corpses in fancy red mandarin dresses before leaving them in public places. Inspector Chen Cao of the Shanghai Police Department has taken a step back from his professional life to pursue an advanced literature course instead of investigating a corruption case, but now he must return to active duty and help in the manhunt.

(By He Jianwei)

Live in the burbs, work in the city

By Wang Yu

Though big cities have reportedly seen a sharp drop in housing prices, the cost of living has not changed. It remains very difficult for young people, even in their 30s, to buy a well-built 100-square-meter apartment within Fourth Ring Road.

Some are saving and waiting, and others are dashing for the suburbs, where realizing the dream is much easier. It may be causing extra pressure in the downtown traffic, but suburb life is the best option for many.

Sick of being boxed in by skyscrapers on the east and of greedy landlords conniving to shake you down? So is everyone. But it takes sacrifices to do something about it. "Before I bought my place, I relocated at least seven times. Sometimes my landlord booted me out, and other times they demanded more than I could pay," says Sun Shui, marketing manager for a publisher. He recently moved to a new 70-square-meter apartment outside Fourth Ring Road where he pays 3,000 yuan per month on his mortgage.

That's not easy to bear, because the mortgage is 60 percent of his salary. That means he has to get responsible, give up his luxury clothes and weekends at the bar and chain himself to his budget.

Xu Yang, a 32-year-old design editor, also moved three months ago. Her new apartment is a 2000 development in Shunyi District. Before she made the leap, she checked out communities by Guangqu Road in Xuanwu District, Lishuiqiao and other real estate projects in Changping. But a visit to a friend's apartment changed her mind.

"Most of the new residential buildings in the city are at least 20 floors. But when I first arrived at the community, I was shocked by the four-floor buildings and public gardens. It is a much nicer place to live," Xu says.

She used to live by the Temple of Earth and commuted to Baiwanzhuang Avenue in Xicheng District. Moving to Shunyi bumped her commute time up to two hours.

"The situation is different for another couple nearby. The husband is a screenwriter and his wife doesn't need to work. They sold their apartment downtown and moved out to the quiet community," she says. But with Subway Line 15 under construction, Xu expects her home will be more convenient in a few years.

Though the communities along Jingshun Road vary from regular houses to those with an attached garage, life in a low-rise building offers something totally different. The distance between buildings is short, but the trees and gardens offer an enjoyable and shady path. There is even a pond with a bridge in the center of the area.

Xu is the third owner of her 100-square-meter flat. Its big living room and two bedrooms are located on the east side of the building, and the windows face in three directions letting in sunshine all day. The basic furniture was already there – abandoned by former tenants – but the style is a little out of step: the stained marble tiles are outdated. Xu hopes to remodel gradually.

After she re-painted the walls and bought accessories from IKEA, her parents moved in from Zhengzhou to stay with her. The new home brought her family back together again.

The community is not far from Roma Lake, one of Shunyi's most popular weekend spots. Though the water in certain areas is polluted, the restaurants are quite nice and sell homestyle fish and vegetarian-friendly fare.

The community is friendly, the air is better and the cost of living is lower. But her office is still downtown.

"Regular buses to Dongzhimen are available on the main road every half an hour in rush hours and continue till 11 pm. Even without a car, it's not hard to spend spare time in the city," Xu says. She makes her morning commute with another friend – a trip mate she found online who also works downtown. Xu pays the driver 10 yuan for gas each trip.

"As a magazine designer, you don't have to clock in so early. The long distance is still a hassle, but this place is comfortable and the subway is coming. When it does, things will be better," Xu says.

A visit to her friend Xu Li's house convinced Xu Yang to make the decision to move to Shunyi. Housing prices are lower than in the city and with the woods and garden in the residential community, it offers pure relaxation after work.

Photos by Xu Yang



Cozy products for the cold



Emoi store at Joycity Photos provided by Emoi

Greening Beijing

By Annie Wei

Joycity is one of the most popular malls to trendy, young Beijingers because of its spacious, shopper-friendly layout and fashionable merchandise; many of its shops offer today's requisite eco-friendly products.

One of the newest additions to Joycity's "green stores" is Emoi, which sells a range of environmentally friendly merchandise: home equipment, office supplies, travel gear and clothing.

One of *Beijing Today's* favorites is a series of blackboard ceramic containers, including cups and flower pots (49 to 119 yuan). The surface of each container contains a piece of blackboard, so you can label it with "coffee," "cocoa" or your name as you would a disposable cup or box. The beauty of it is you can erase the writing later on and reuse the container. Less waste of natural resources, less garbage and more savings for you!

The glasses in the series (59 to 69 yuan) come in different candy colors and are safe to use with boiling water.

Emoi

Where: B1-08, Joycity, 131 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5971 6521

Golden September and silver October

By Annie Wei

"Jinjiuyinshi" is a jargon in the jewelry retail industry, meaning "golden September, silver October."



New K-Gold design
Photo provided by World Gold Council

Since the October national holiday is the country's most popular wedding season, there is a tidal wave of demand for wedding rings – in gold or silver – between September and October. Besides the bride and groom, their relatives and close friends also purchase jewelry to give the couple.

One of the "in" gold products today is K-Gold, made up of 75 percent pure gold and other metals to add strength and vary color. With the addition of alloys, K-Gold can be pure white, rose-red, pink-red, red or purple. The product is endorsed by the World Gold Council, the world's largest gold promotion organization, which has been actively involved in the Chinese market since 2003.

K-Gold designs are sold in Beijing through six appointed jewelry companies. The price of pieces ranges from 500 to 20,000 yuan.

K-Gold

Where: Temix counter, 1/F SOGO, 8 Xuanwumen Wai Dajie, Xuanwu District

Open: 10 am – 9 pm

Tel: 6310 1410

Website: k-gold.org.cn



Eco cup, 59 yuan



Wool gloves, 880 yuan
Photos provided by Max Co.



Pop coat, 9,180 yuan



Rain boots, 1,280 yuan

Staying warm and Chic this winter

By Annie Wei

Having not only warm but chic clothes is the secret to being a confident, happy woman during Beijing's long, frigid and gloomy winter.

Two weeks ago, Italian brand Max & Co. held its Fall/Winter 2009 show in town, which featured casual clothes and accessories that were affordable yet screamed Italian chic. Max & Co., one of the lines under the Max Mara Group, is ideal for fashionistas on a tight budget; although the brand's collection does not have the luxurious finish of more expensive lines, its clothes are trendy, sophisticated and glamorous.

Its Fall/Winter collection channels into outfits the "rock and romantic" theme: snappy dark gray coats, eggplant-colored dresses in fluid shapes, knitted bolero tops, wide mesh-leather-metal belts, slouchy boots, platform shoes and flats. There are also sporty jackets, biker tees and leather jackets. The fun and challenge are in mixing and matching.

Its vintage-style clothing is worth the investment. Some pieces are a throwback to the 1960s – bright red or yellow coats, creamy leather shoes, elegant gloves and handbags – and bring to mind the glamour of Old Hollywood.

Beijing Today particularly likes Max & Co.'s rain boots. They are not leather-made but still thick and solid. They are a practical choice on a wet, winter day and should be paired with thick wool socks. This is a model of staying warm yet in vogue.

Max & Co

Where: M3007, 3/F Shin Kong Plaza, 87 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6533 1051

Where: SB113-114, Guomao Shangcheng, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6505 1812



Vintage leather bag, 4,780 yuan

Special winter food offers

By Annie Wei

Restaurants are gearing up for the cold season with warm, winter offerings. *Beijing Today* checked out two places with great menu deals.



Nasi goreng kampung, 48 yuan

Photos by Leo Liu

Lunch deals at The Opposite House's cafe

By Annie Wei

Food and drinks at The Opposite House in Sanlitun do not come cheap, so it's welcome news that the hotel's cafe, The Village Cafe, has launched a lunch promo. Here's the deal: 48 yuan for one course, 68 yuan for two and 88 yuan for three. No extra charges. And a different menu every week.

Beef rendang, served with pickled vegetables and steamed rice (48 yuan), is an Indonesian and Malaysian favorite that's prepared with dry red curry and blue ginger. Blue ginger is an aged, harder and spicier ginger that helps tenderize meat. The dish is sprinkled with dry coconut, which gives it a strong tropical flavor. Some of The Village Cafe's European diners eat beef rendang with bread instead of rice.

For people looking for hot soup to ward off the winter chills, the cafe's Malaysian Chinese chef, Lee Keong Gan, recommends butternut pumpkin soup (48 yuan) and prawn wonton soup (48 yuan).

To make the butternut pumpkin soup, Lee starts with a roast butternut squash to

intensify the soup's aroma.

Prawn wonton soup, a popular Cantonese dish, uses minced prawn and pork for the wonton filling.

For dessert, there's mango truffle (48 yuan). Lee only uses Australian mangoes – big ones with red and orange skin – which are sweeter than the local variety. The truffle has three layers: chocolate sponge cake is at the bottom, followed by diced mango with cream, then a covering of passion fruit sauce. The truffle has a sweet and sour taste, and comes in a generous serving.

Lee suggests trying Pavlova with fresh strawberry and passion fruit (48 yuan). It is an Australian concoction of egg whites, sugar and fresh fruits named after Russian opera diva Anna Pavlova. "The meringue goes well with fruits that are a bit sour," Lee said.

The Village Cafe also holds regular cooking classes. On November 14, Lee will tackle Indonesian cuisine.

First on the menu is a salad called gadogado, which contains vegetables and dry tofu. The dry tofu will be marinated

in yellow ginger powder, but the key is to make the spicy peanut sauce right, Lee said. He said Southeast Asians like color in their food, and that is reflected in the colors of the green, white, yellow and red ingredients.

The second course is beef rendang. People who do not eat beef can have chicken or lamb as a substitute. If beef is used, Lee said the meat needs to be stewed for two hours to make it tender. Once the dish is done, the practice in Southeast Asia is to leave it overnight so that the meat has more time to absorb the sauces.

Dessert is black sticky rice served with coconut milk. The secret to preparing the dessert is to soak the rice in cold water overnight. The coconut milk can also be boiled with pandan leaves: Southeast Asia's version of vanilla. Adding a pinch of salt to the coconut milk will intensify the coconut flavor.

The cooking lesson, including feasting on the dishes, costs 288 yuan plus a 15 percent surcharge. Participants will be served a free glass of wine and soft drinks, tea or coffee.

The Village Cafe

Where: The Opposite House, Building 1, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 6:30 am – 10:30 pm

Tel: 6410 5210

Cooking classes

Where: The Village Cafe, 1/F The Opposite House

When: November 14, 2:30-5:30 pm



Traditional greek salad, 48 yuan

Old Taiwan name and taste



Eight-treasure glutinous rice with red crab, 168 yuan per crab

Photos by Yu Tingmei

By Annie Wei

Ask any long-time resident from Taiwan what's the best Taiwanese restaurant in town and you'll get an overwhelming response of "Shinyeh." Why? Shinyeh is a name these people were familiar with long before they came to the mainland; it is a popular Taiwanese chain with a long

history, and its food is consistently good no matter which island you are on.

Pan-fried pork liver with coriander (36 yuan) has been one of Shinyeh's trademarks since it was established three decades ago. The pork liver used by Shinyeh's chefs is not only fresh, but must be also a certain size, thickness, color,



Roasted mullet roe served with turnip and leek slices, 98 yuan

luster and softness.

It is a traditional Taiwan dish, which people made many years ago when resources on island were scarce and they had to make the most of every edible scrap. This is also the reason Taiwanese cuisine includes many dishes that use organs.

Roasted mullet roe served with turnip and leek slices (98 yuan) – fresh, crisp and tender – is a dish best enjoyed in winter. Mullet, a migratory fish, winter in the sea off southwestern Taiwan. During this time, they become fat and very tasty. Roasted

mullet roe is popular among Japanese visitors to Taiwan, who consider it a delicacy.

Eight-treasure glutinous rice with red crab (168 yuan per crab) is a specialty rarely absent at Taiwanese wedding banquets. The way Shinyeh makes the dish is to mix glutinous rice with mushrooms, pork, carrots, deep-fried red onions and coriander, then to steam it. When the rice is done, a raw red crab is placed on top of the mixture and everything is restewed, which allows the rice to absorb the crab's juices. This is heaven, albeit cholesterol-laden: the rice contains plenty of fat roe and fresh crabmeat.

For dessert, check out the menu for Taiwanese desserts known the world over.

Shinyeh also provides good service; its staff is recruited and trained in Taiwan.

Shinyeh

Where: 6 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11:30 am – 2:30 pm,

5:30-10:30 pm

Tel: 6552 5066

Where: 19 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District

Open: 11 am – 11 pm

Tel: 8248 6288

'Giant Pianist' brushes modern color to classics

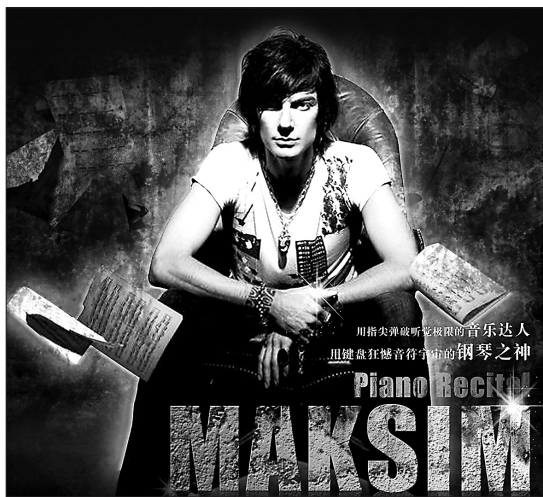
By He Jianwei

From Maksim Mrvica's appearance, few would believe he is a classical musician: he stands two meters tall, has a charming Eastern European face and sports a couple of earrings. The 30-year-old Croatian pianist could be more easily mistaken for a pop star or fashion model.

Black or white suits is the traditional attire at classical music concerts, but Mrvica stopped wearing them about 10 years ago. "I really don't like suits. Whenever I did classical concerts in my country, I always tried to do something different. So I incorporated multimedia elements like a laser show before concerts or a different lighting method, or I dressed differently," he said.

Mrvica, dubbed the "Giant Pianist" because of his height, will come to China next month for his first concert tour on the mainland. Beijing will be the first of his four stops, with a show on November 10 at the Poly Theater.

Born in Sibenik, a small, scenic medieval city on Croatia's Adriatic Coast, Mrvica decided to become a pianist at age eight, when he caught a glimpse of the instrument at his best friend's house. Two



decades later, he has become one of the world's most famous pianists, but his path to success has not been one straight line.

He began learning the piano at age nine, and dreamed of making a career out of his passion for music. His parents knew nothing about classical music and even now, still prefer to listen to pop songs on the radio. But they gladly paid for their son's piano lessons.

It was not long before it became obvious to Mrvica's teachers that the boy was a rare

talent. They encouraged his parents to enroll him at the state music school in Sibenik.

When he was 15, civil war broke out. His devotion to the piano kept him going: despite the fighting, he would practice in the basement of the music conservatory. "I remember a few times we had to run from my city to the islands. We were refugees. But I couldn't stand more than five days without the piano, so on my own, I'd go back to Sibenik, to my

house, to practice the piano. Two days later I'd rejoin the others," Mrvica said.

He entered his first piano competition in 1993, practicing feverishly to meet people's expectations. War still raged in Sibenik, but there was peace in Zagreb, where the contest was held. The 18-year-old Mrvica charmed the judge and spectators just by turning up; after his performance, the judge halted the competition and immediately declared him the winner.

In 2001, Mrvica met Tonci Huljic, a composer who ended up writing original pieces for him and introduced him to Mel Bush, a well-known promoter in the British music industry. Bush signed him up on the spot after hearing him play just one piece.

Mrvica's first crossover album for EMI Classical, *The Piano Player*, became a hit in 2003.

The Piano Player – Maksim Mrvica Solo Concert

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: November 10, 7:30 pm
Admission: 480-1,080 yuan
Tel: 5166 1145

Upcoming

Movie

Manufactured Landscapes

Where: Blue Bud Cafe, 3 Guowang Hutong, Jiugulou Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: November 6, 8 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8404 5129

Stage in September

Concert

Ensemble Sagittarius Concert

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District
When: November 1, 7:30 pm
Admission: 60-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Maksim Piano Recital

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: November 10, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

Quatuor Diotima Beijing Concert

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District
When: November 21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

David Braid Jazz Concert

Where: Forbidden City Music Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), 4 Zhonghua Lu, Dongcheng District
When: November 22, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Dance

Tenderhook by the Scottish Dance Theatre

Where: Mei Lanfang Grand Theater, 32 Ping'anli Xi Dajie, Xicheng District
When: November 6-7, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-580 yuan
Tel: 5833 1288

ABT Contemporary Ballet Collection's Asia Premiere

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: November 12-13, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Carmen

Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: November 28-29, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,880 yuan
Tel: 6551 8058

Drama

Romeo and Juliet by the British TNT Theatre

Where: Drama Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: November 9-10, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-480 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

The Magic Flute

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: November 20-23, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Jackie Zhang)

5 Friday, October 30

Exhibition

Lee Dong Jae Solo Exhibition

Where: Gallery Art-side Beijing, Space 2, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 5, daily except Monday, 10 am - 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9192

The Most Beautiful Book – 7th National Book Design Exhibition

Where: National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: Until November 12, daily except Monday, 9 am - 5 pm

Admission: 30 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Nightlife

The First Commemoration – Zhang Tie Concert

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North

Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 5900 0969

Lucio's Birthday Party

Where: Hot Cat Club, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 8:30 pm

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 6400 7868



Movie

The Meerkats

Where: MoBox Books Life, 288 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Spend at least 10 yuan on a drink

Tel: 8261 8538

6 Saturday, October 31

Exhibition

Kim Mu Kee Solo Exhibition

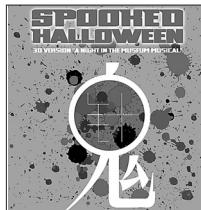
Where: Gallery Artside Beijing, Space 1, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 24, daily except Monday, 10 am - 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9192

Nightlife



SPOOKED Halloween – A Night in the Museum Musical

Where: LAN Club, 4/F Twin Tower B-12, Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 1500 yuan

Tel: 13810347555

Happy Halloween Party

Where: 2 Kolegas Bar, 21 Liang-

maqiao Lu (inside Fenghuayuan Drive-in cinema), Chaoyang District

When: 10 pm

Admission: 60 yuan; 50 yuan for students

Tel: 6436 8998

Halloween Party with Pet Conspiracy

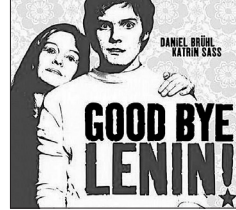
Where: Star Live, 3/F Tango, 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng District

When: 10:30 pm

Admission: 70 yuan

Tel: 6425 5677

Movie



Good Bye, Lenin!

Where: Lele Bar (50 meters east of Communication University of China's north gate), Dingfuzhuang, Chaoyang Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6576 5987

Sunday, November 1

Exhibition

Made on Earth 2009 – Zhang Ge Solo Exhibition

Where: Artist Village Gallery, 1 North Renzhuang Village, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District

When: Until November 30, daily, 10 am - 6 pm (reservation necessary)

Admission: 20 yuan

Tel: 6959 8343

Draw Your Rainbow – Ye Jianguang

Picture Show

Where: Cerise Cafe, Yu'er Hutong, Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District

When: Until November 18, daily, 10 am - midnight
Admission: Free
Tel: 15801672438

Nightlife

Back to the Rock Age

Where: Weibozhiyan Club, Room 2308, 3/F North Building, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: 9 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 5900 0969

Ladies' Rock Night

Where: 13 Club, 161 Lanqiying,

Haidian District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 100 yuan for men; free for women

Tel: 8262 8077

Movie

To Each His Cinema

Where: No. 3 Club, 43 Beisanhuan Xi Lu, Haidian District

When: 3 pm

Admission: 20 yuan (includes a soft drink)

Tel: 8211 5288

Is sleeping with your baby safe?

By Venus Lee

Although most babies are born healthy and develop normally, it is natural for parents to worry about the health and safety of a child. One of the greatest concerns for parents of infants is sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), sometimes called crib death.

Recent research found these unexplained deaths of otherwise healthy infants occur most often in children who share a bed with their parents. Some worry these new findings may demonize what has long been a bonding experience.

CFP Photo

Sharing a bed a risk?

If you often sleep with your baby, will you remember to put him or her in a crib after you have been out for a few drinks or had a home party? Probably not.

The study found a strong link between drinking and SIDS. Among mothers whose babies died, 25 percent had more than two drinks during the preceding 24 hours. Only 2 percent of mothers in the control group had been drinking when they put their child to bed.

Also striking was that 54 percent of the babies had been sleeping with their parents, either in bed or on a sofa, immediately before death. Only 20 percent of mothers in the control group said they shared a bed or sofa when their child last slept.

Almost one-third of babies who died had been sleeping with a parent who had recently used drugs or alcohol, compared to 3 percent of healthy babies.

Researchers are not out to demonize sharing the parental bed — only sharing it after consuming alcohol or drugs. Parents are also warned to always avoid situations where they might accidentally fall asleep with a young baby, such as cuddling on the sofa when tired.

Other factors linked to crib death were leaving the baby sleeping in a room alone, having a mother who smoked during pregnancy, being swaddled before bed, sleeping face down or being placed for sleep on a pillow.

The safest place for an infant to sleep in its first six months is in a crib beside the parental bed, said the study which was led by professor Peter Fleming from the University of Bristol and published in the *British Medical Journal* mid-October.

"Evidence shows that babies are safer in a crib," said He Jianping, a doctor of neonatology at Beijing Children's Hospital. "A couple of things are immediately clear from this latest study. First, sleeping with your baby if you are under the influence of drugs and alcohol is a recipe for disaster, and second, sleeping anywhere but the bedroom is particularly hazardous. Snoozing with your baby on a chair, bean-bag or sofa may be tempting for a tired parent but should be avoided — even if you haven't had a drink or taken any drugs."

Preventing SIDS

Crib death is rare, and health-care professionals are not trying to alarm parents: however, it is still important to be informed. These tips are meant as a guide only, and it is up to parents to decide what is right for their family.

While there is no guaranteed way to prevent SIDS, there are ways to limit the risk:

1. Stop smoking

Taking care of babies begins before birth. Studies show that babies of mothers who smoked during pregnancy are three times more likely to experience crib death.

None of the chemicals contained in cigarette smoke is good for a baby, but two are especially harmful: nicotine and carbon monoxide. "These two toxins account for almost every smoking-related complication in pregnancy, such as stillbirth, premature delivery and low birth weight," she said. "When you smoke during pregnancy, that toxic brew gets into your bloodstream — your baby's only source of oxygen and nutrients."

Do not smoke around your baby, and insist that others also refrain from smoking in the baby's presence. "Infants who are exposed to second-hand smoke are more likely to die from SIDS than those who are in a non-smoking environment," she said.

Regular check-ups before birth can ensure the health of both mother and baby.

2. Breast feed

If possible, breast feed your baby at least for the first few months. There is a growing body of evidence suggesting that breast-fed babies have a lower incidence of SIDS.

3. Lay baby on back

"At around five to six months your child may start to roll in bed. If you find them lying on their front, gently turn them onto their back again," she said.

Since the early 1990s, UK parents have been advised to place their babies on their backs when laying them down to sleep. This has significantly reduced the risk of SIDS by as much as 70 percent.

4. Comfortable temperature

Overheating is an important risk factor in SIDS. A room that is too warm, or a crib with excess bedding, can easily overheat your baby: around 18 to 20 C is ideal.

Use single sheets or a baby sleeping bag for bedding. Avoid pillows, duvets and quilts. If you swaddle your child, do so with light materials and no additional bedding.

"Watch out for signs of overheating. Your baby's hands and feet will usually be cooler, so check the belly to gauge temperature," she said. Signs of overheating are sweating, rapid breathing, agitation and a feverish brow.

Add or remove blankets if your child is too cool or too hot. Never put your baby to bed with a hot water bottle or electric blanket, and do not place them too close to

a radiator.

5. Keep head uncovered

Excess heat is lost through the head, so always make sure your child's head is uncovered before they go to sleep. Place the baby at the foot of the crib so that they can't wriggle down under the sheets. Tuck the sheets securely at the shoulders to keep them comfortable.

6. Pacifier may help

Recent studies indicate that pacifier use may decrease the incidence of SIDS. If your baby favors using a pacifier, always lay him or her down with the pacifier in mouth, but do not feel that you have to replace it if it falls out during sleep. "If your child is breast fed, don't offer a pacifier until he or she is four weeks old, by which time breast feeding should be well established," she said.

7. Don't wait to see doctor

Be alert for any signs or symptoms that your baby may be seriously unwell: if the child is less responsive, persistently agitated, crying, grunting, reluctant to eat, feverish and sweating, limp, avoiding light or if you discover a new rash, assume something is very wrong.

It is a good idea to take a class on infant lifesaving while you are pregnant. Additionally, be sure that your child's caregivers are well versed on lifesaving techniques and practice SIDS prevention when caring for your baby.

Subway stops to the past

Imperial sites along new Subway Line

By Zhang Dongya

After five years of construction, Subway Line 4 began operating late last month. Beijing's newest subway line, which has 24 stations, runs from the northwest to the south and crosses Haidian, Xicheng, Xuanwu and Fengtai districts.

Aside from helping relieve traffic congestion, Line 4 offers more convenient access to some of the city's most popular attractions such as the Summer Palace (Yiheyuan) and the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan).

Between its northernmost terminal, Anhejiabei, and Beijing Zoo are stations standing beside imperial sites. *Beijing Today* offers you a guide to where to stop and look around to visit the capital's past.

Be warned of the crowds, since the subway line, with its creatively designed and decorated stations, has itself become a tourist attraction.



Entrance to Beijing's Suzhou Street

Beigongmen station, or the Summer Palace's north gate, was the main entrance to the imperial garden during the reign of Qing-dynasty Emperor Qianlong (1711-1799). Now the site's main entrance is its east gate, Donggongmen, where a busy bus stop is located.

Since Line 4's opening, however, hordes of tourists have converged on Beigongmen, giving it back its old glory.

From Beigongmen, the first attraction you will see inside the Summer Palace is Suzhou Street, a miniature reproduction of the southern city's ancient commercial street.

Qianlong built the first Suzhou Street in a public area in Haidian in 1761, dedicated to the empress dowager who was fascinated with the prosperous street scenes in the south. The emperor also ordered some merchants from Suzhou to set up businesses on the street. The street's architecture, which was copied from the original location, and the Suzhou dialect heard on every corner helped create a genuine southern atmosphere.

Qianlong built two more Suzhou streets, one each inside the Summer Palace and the Old Summer Palace where the empress dowager's safety was ensured and she could roam

freely. There, palace maids and eunuchs played the role of peddlers.

Between 1860 and 1861, however, the three Suzhou streets were destroyed by Anglo-French Allied Forces that invaded Beijing. The only one rebuilt was the Summer Palace's. The street now features tea houses, pawnshops and theaters for *pingtan* – a Suzhou performance art – a recreation of its look during the Qing Dynasty. Peddlers and boatmen don Qing-era clothing to complete the trip back to the past.

The Suzhou Street in Haidian is only remembered through a station on Subway Line 10 named in its honor: Suzhoujie station.

The Summer Palace

Open: 7 am – 5 pm (November 1 – March 31)

Admission: 20 yuan; 10 yuan for students

Tel: 6288 1144

Military camp instead of imperial garden

Xiyuan station is the third stop from the north. To most Beijingers, the mention of "xiyuan" brings to mind the imperial gardens of the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, where emperors lived, worked and played. The Ming and Qing rulers built their two biggest gardens – the Summer Palace and the Old Summer Palace – in Beijing's west, thus they were collectively known as Xiyuan, or the Western Gardens.

Xiyuan station's design incorporates features of imperial gardens, but that is where the connection stops: in its past life, it was a military camp. During imperial times, it served as a base for troops guarding the Old Summer Palace and the emperor whenever he was in residence.

The camp stretched from the Summer Palace in the north to Liulangzhuang fields in the south; it went from Wanquanhe Lu in the east to Kuminghu Lu in the west.



1. National Library station on Subway Line 4

2. The restored Suzhou Street in the Summer Palace is a reproduction of the southern city's ancient commercial street.



3. Subway Line 4 has a stop at Beigongmen, the main entrance to the Summer Palace in Qing Dynasty.

4. Xiyuan station's design incorporates features of imperial gardens, but the place was actually a military camp in imperial times.

Photos by Jason Wang

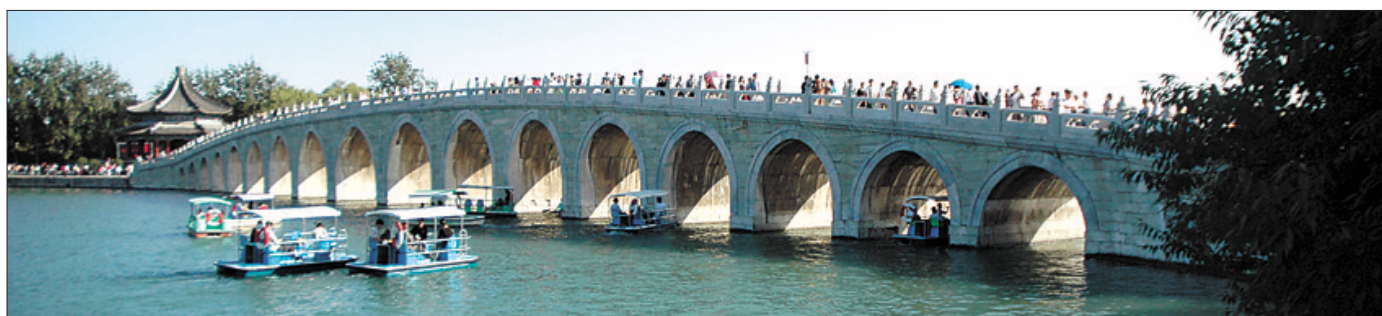
Gongyi Xiqiao

Continued on page 21...

... continued from page 20



The Beijing Zoo station has balloon designs on its ceiling and cartoon frescoes to entertain children.



With the opening of Subway Line 4, people have more convenient access to imperial sites like the Summer Palace.

Photos by Jason Wang

Zhongguancun and yesterday's eunuchs

Zhongguancun has become synonymous with its electronics markets and offices that house high-tech electronics companies. The station is decorated with integrated circuit board to emphasize its claim to fame. Before it became "China's Silicon Valley," Zhongguancun was a scenic area that boasted clear lakes and a view of the mountains.

Starting in Ming, powerful court eunuchs, drawn by the area's beautiful landscape, began buying graveyard plots there for themselves. It eventually became a retirement village for old eunuchs who had left the Forbidden City and were supported by rich eunuchs still serving in the palace. Since the eunuch was also called "zhongguan" besides the more common name "tai-jian," the area was named Zhongguan Er.

During the Republic of China period (1912–1949), Tsinghua and Peking University, formerly called Yanjing University, were built a stone's throw away from Zhongguancun. After the People's Republic was founded in 1949, the government designated the area around Zhongguancun as a culture and education district, after which a construction boom of universities and educational institutions took place.

Imperial garden at former Beijing Zoo

Visitors to the Beijing Zoo might be surprised to discover ancient buildings inside the modern compound. The place used to be an imperial garden in the Ming Dynasty.

It received a facelift during Emperor Qianlong's reign, and later the ruler gave it to a court official to serve as his private



Beijing Zoo



Zhongguancun station is decorated with integrated circuit boards on its ceiling to emphasize the area's high-tech element.

garden. In 1919, it was turned into a public park, and in 1955, into a zoo.

Three very old buildings can be found inside the zoo: Changguan Lou, Changchun Tang and

Qinfeng Tang.

Changguan Lou is the two-story building immediately visible to visitors who enter from the zoo's north entrance. Built during Qing-Empress Dowager Cixi's reign (1875–1908), it was planned as one of the imperial palaces where the emperor and his family could stop to rest on their way to the Summer Palace. Emperor Guangxu and his mother, Empress Dowager Cixi, however, died soon after Changguan was completed, so the building was never used for its intended purpose.

It is said Sun Yat-sen, the first president of the Republic of China, lived in the building in 1912. Changguan has been restored but is not open to the public.

At the center of the zoo is Qinfeng Tang, facing a lake and bordered on the west by a corridor. It is now a restaurant named after the building.

Beijing Zoo's gate retains its ancient flavor, but the rest are 21st-century facilities and attractions.

Beijing Zoo

Open: 7:30 am – 5 pm
(November 1 – March 31)
Admission: 10 yuan
Tel: 6831 5131

Travel information

Subway Line 4

Operating Hours: 5 am – 10:45 pm (from Anhejiabei station); 5:10 am – 11:10 pm (from Gongyiqiaoxi station)

Ticket: 2 yuan

Other attractions along Subway Line 4

Old Summer Palace

The garden was ransacked and burned by Anglo-French Allied Forces in 1860 and features ruins. It also houses restored gardens, baroque buildings, art treasures, cultural relics and an imperial library of irreplaceable books.

Open: 7 am – 7:30 pm

Admission: 10 yuan; 5 yuan for students
Tel: 6263 2631

National Library of China

The library draws thousands of visitors every day with its extensive collection of books, as well as regular lectures and concerts.

Open: 9 am – 5 pm

Tel: 8854 5426

Dining



New Chef in Town: Yoshinori Mizutani

Yoshinori Mizutani, the new Chef de Cuisine of Nishimura, Shangri-La Hotel, Beijing, arrives with 20 years of experience cooking for Japanese diplomats and other connoisseurs of fine Japanese cuisine. For seven years, he was the private

chef of Japanese ambassadors in Singapore and Cairo, and has worked in high-end restaurants and five-star hotels in Egypt, Singapore and Japan. His creations have to be tasted to be believed, especially his seafood.

Where: Nishimura, Shangri-La Hotel, 29 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District
Tel: 6841 2211 ext. 6719



Grand Cafe

Grand Cafe is now serving its popu-

lar lunch and dinner buffets, including the freshest Japanese sushi, along with hot Mediterranean dishes and succulent seafood; home-made Beijing food and European-inspired desserts are all prepared skilfully. In addition to the wide variety of dishes prepared in the show kitchen, the a la carte menu specializes in Mediterranean and Chinese comfort food. Guests can enjoy dishes like Caesar salad, tagliatelle bolognese and Hainan chicken rice.

Where: Grand Cafe, Grand Hyatt Beijing, 1 Dong Chang'an Jie, Dongcheng District

Cost: 228 yuan (lunch buffet), 248 yuan (dinner buffet), 288 yuan (weekend buffet); subject to 15 percent surcharge
Tel: 8518 1234 ext. 6021 or 6024

Sureno

Sureno has a new a la carte menu

this season. Highlights include the pumpkin and king scallop soup, green gnocchi with Asiago fondue and saffron risotto topped with a passionately prepared ossobuco.

Where: The Opposite House, The Village, 11 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6410 5210

Family Set Menus

For November, Yao Chi Cantonese Restaurant brasserie offers home-cooked family set dinner menus prepared by master chef Chung Fai Men.

Where: Yao Chi Cantonese Restaurant, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Cost: 180 yuan per person for 5-6 courses, 228 yuan per person for 8-10 courses; subject to 15 percent surcharge
Tel: 6530 9383

Cinema



Astro Boy

When a scientist's young son dies, he secretly creates a powerful robot child to replace him, however the robot uses its incredible powers to become a world famous superhero and faces his biggest challenge when an alien race threatens Earth.

When: From October 23



2012

An epic adventure about a global cataclysm that brings an end to the world and tells of the heroic struggle of the survivors.

When: From November 3

The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3

Armed men hijack a New York City subway train, holding the passengers hostage in return for a ransom, and turn-

ing an ordinary day's work for dispatcher Walter Garber into a face-off with a criminal mastermind.

When: From October 20

This Is It

A compilation of interviews, rehearsals and backstage footage of Michael Jackson as he prepared for his series of sold-out shows in London.

When: From October 28

Knowing

A teacher opens a time capsule that has been dug up at his son's elementary school; in it are some chilling predictions – some that have already occurred and others that are about to – that lead him to believe his family will play a role in the events that are about to unfold.

When: From October 30

Theaters:

Stellar International Cineplex

Add: 5/F Jinyuan Shopping Center, 1 Yuanda Lu, Haidian District

Tel: 8886 4988

Add: 4/F Wangjing International Business Center, 9 Wangjing Jie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 59203788

UME International Cineplex

Add: 44 Kexueyuan Nan Lu, Haidian District

Tel: 8211 5566

Add: 5/F Fuli Plaza, Shuangjing Qiao Bei, Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 5903 7171

Imegabox

Add: 3/F Jinlehu, Zhongguancun Plaza Shopping Center, Haidian District

Tel: 5986 3777

Add: B1 Sanlitun Village, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6417 6118

Wanda International Cinema

Add: Wanda International Plaza, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 5960 3399

Hotel

Clubber's Night

Experience the hottest bars and clubs in the capital and end your night with a stay in the deluxe room of Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing. Throw all your passion into Clubber's Night for an amazing and unexpected experience in this ancient city.

Where: Park Plaza Beijing Wangfujing, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District
When: Until November 30

Cost: starting from 858 yuan per night (minimum of two consecutive nights); subject to 15 percent service charge; package includes breakfast and free draft beers, soft drinks or cocktail samples at First Lounge, Fez Bar, All Star Sports Bar & Grill, Face Bar and Beijing HLG Club

Tel: 8522 1999

Philippine Charity Ball

Experience Philippine-style celebrating at Pista, a charity ball sponsored by Beijing's Filipino community. Besides dancing and a menu of delectable Filipino dishes, the evening will feature entertainment by Filipino musicians and a top comedian from the Philippines that will leave you in stitches. The ball aims to raise funds to support the work of the Beijing

International Committee for Chinese Orphans, which helps congenitally disabled child orphans.

Where: Doubletree by Hilton, 168 Guang'anmen Wai Dajie, Xuanwu District

When: November 7

Cost: 600 yuan (tickets)

Tel: 13718810934

Full Day Meeting Package

A dedicated Swiss Meeting Specialist from Swissotel Beijing will help to plan, coordinate and assist at every stage of your event to ensure everything runs smoothly and professionally. The package includes main meeting room rental from 8 am to 5 pm, an international buffet lunch, two fresh coffee breaks with a selection of snack items, basic sound system and equipment, your choice of meeting room set-up with stationery and a dedicated Swiss Meeting Specialist.

Where: Swissotel Beijing, 2 Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie, Chaoyang District
When: December 1 – February 28, 2010

Cost: 380 yuan net per person (minimum 20); subject to 15 percent surcharge

Tel: 6553 2288 ext. 2263



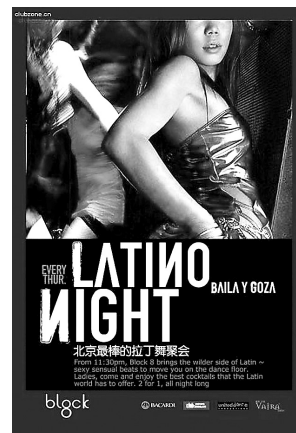
Park Plaza Beijing West opens at Wukesong

Park Plaza Hotels & Resorts, the upper mid-scale brand of Carlson Hotels Worldwide, announced the opening of its 10th property this month: the Park Plaza Beijing West. With its distinctly modern design, the smart 263-room Park Plaza Beijing West is well suited for the discerning leisure and business traveller.

Guests are guaranteed a relaxing and comfortable stay with the latest hi-tech room amenities. Food connoisseurs will enjoy its diverse dining options at the Real Eastern Dining, the Solid Dining restaurant and the Deli.cio.us desert store.

Where: Park Plaza Beijing West, 17 Xicui Lu, Haidian District
Tel: 6813 0088

Event



Latino Night

Join Latin dancers and party people every Thursday night for Beijing's best night of dancing and Latin beats with DJ D-Yang. From 11:30 pm, Block 8 brings out the wilder side of Latin, sexy sensual beats to move you on the dance floor. Come and enjoy the best cocktails the Latin world has to offer, with buy-one-get-one-free drinks for ladies all night long.

Where: Block 8, 8 Chaoyang Park Xi Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 9-10 pm (classes)
Tel: 6508 8585

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

The misadventures of sowing wild oats

By Venus Lee

If love is compared to the board game Hare and Hounds, men would be the predator and women the prey. This mate-hunting tradition has rewarded many who played by its rules. But one of my college classmates, Shuai Shuai, does not believe in this approach and does the chasing if she needs to.

When we were in college, she turned up her nose at men who pursued her. This puzzled me and I asked her for an explanation. "I'm fed up with men's flowery, deceiving words and find it more exciting to take the initiative. I particularly like the challenge of winning over another woman's boyfriend. I think men who are single are bores," Shuai said.

She went after each man that caught her eye, but none held her interest for too long. Her typical relationship lasted three months; when the newness wore off, she'd start looking around for a new challenge.

Shuai gained an unsavory reputation in school, but wagging tongues did not stop her – nor did graduating from college and entering the professional world. If anything, she became even bolder. Secretly, other women envied her skill and daring.

One day in the office, she got enraged with one of her male colleagues and

decided vengeance would be hooking up with him although he was engaged to be married. She waited for the perfect opportunity to seduce him and got her wish when the company sent the two of them to Tianjin to meet with clients.

They could have returned to Beijing that evening, but during dinner, she urged the clients and her colleague to keep drinking. He got drunk, so they decided to just check into a hotel.

At the hotel, Shuai took a scented bath, put on sexy lingerie and knocked on her colleague's door. They ended up in bed as she planned.

She convinced him to break up with his fiancée so they could be together. Six months later, the unexpected happened: Shuai had fallen in love with the man, but he wanted to end things with her, saying he planned to win back his ex-girlfriend. He

quit his job and went after the woman who had moved to Inner Mongolia.

Shuai almost went crazy because he was the first man to dump her. She refused to let him go and devised ways to get him back, including claiming she was pregnant – which eventually turned out to be a lie. She even followed him to Inner Mongolia, but after three months conceded defeat and returned to Beijing.

That was two years ago. Last Saturday, I bumped into her at a party and we discussed the man. There was still a hint of pain in her eyes while talking about the past, but she sounded like a different woman – more mature, accepting and humble.

"I admit I sowed my wild oats before that episode in Inner

Mongolia, but now I'm really looking for a serious relationship," she said.

Did she just say she did farm work? I was stunned and a bit confused. "Oh my gosh, you planted crops in Inner Mongolia?" I said. "I guess it's true what they say that love makes you do crazy things."

Shuai burst into laughter. "Silly! 'Wild oats' means the indiscretions of youth, but be happy you don't know much about it," she said.



I AM PUNK

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Fire flash



Photo by Tiffany Tan

By Tiffany Tan

This one was easy to guess although I had to check the Chinese writing to be sure. Still, I was stunned for a minute; it's not every day you go window shopping and come face to face with a tag that says, "fire flash." The words sounded so ominous – and so out of place inside a trendy clothing store – I felt like I had to do something dramatic.

Well, the English translation should have said "flammable," which means "capable of being easily ignited."

The warning in Chinese says, "Because the product's surface contains fuzzy material, please do not bring it close to fireworks." It sounds

funny, but shoppers should take it seriously – especially since three months down the road is Spring Festival, where people are hoping to see a fireworks extravaganza that will top this year's colorful, magical, awesome welcome to a new lunar year. Besides, if a multimillion-dollar landmark building can become a giant torch, how much more a small, helpless sweater. Bad bad bad fireworks!

I cannot figure out how the writer came up with "fire flash." Maybe as a result of a visualization technique? All fires start from a spark, and a "spark" and a "flash" look the same? Or maybe he or she was trying to have fun with synonyms? Let us know if you have the answer.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

1. He persists to keep calligraphy brushes relevant.

Professor Zhu Shida

(ZS): The verb to persist means to stick to it; continue firmly; refuse to stop or be changed. It is an intransitive verb. For example, She persisted in reading the newspaper at the dinner table. On the tops of some very high mountains, snow persists throughout the year. How can it be followed by an infinitive clause? So, the right way to say this is: He persists in keeping calligraphy brushes relevant. However, the verb to persist can have an object clause when it means to say again and again or maintain: He persisted that he was innocent of the crime.

Native speaker Steven Sandor (SS):

There is nothing more to say about this example. If you cannot remember the rules above, it may be better to revise the sentence to avoid this construction entirely: He has never given up his calligraphy brushes. You could also avoid this by using a transitive verb instead of an intransitive verb: He continues to use (or to write with) calligraphy brushes.

2. Eye, eyeing and eying; age, aging and ageing

ZS: When a verb ends with e, the letter will have to be omitted if it is to be changed into a participle. Take the verb to endure for an example: We are enduring the greatest hardship since we started the experiment. However, with the verbs to eye and to age, the rule may and may not apply. You will be perfectly right to write: The dog is eying the stranger, or, The dog is eyeing the stranger. The same holds true for the verb to age.

SS: Whether to write eying or eyeing comes down to a matter of style. Both are correct and in common use. Check with your editor or instructor to see if your style guide has a preference for one or the other. Generally, shorter is better when writing, but in this case there is no clear winner.

Surrogates (2009)

Movie of the week

If you enjoy fast-paced, Sci-Fi thrillers and murder-mysteries, *Surrogates* is sure to be a great surprise at a time when most films are putting minimal time and effort into fleshing out a story.

Bruce Willis and Radha Mitchell play FBI agents investigating the destruction of two surrogates and the operators who were connected to them, which up until then has never been possible.

When people use a surrogate to be anyone they want to be, how can you know who you are talking to or what their ulterior motives are?



Synopsis

People are living their lives from the safety of their homes via robotic surrogates – sexy, physically perfect mechanical representations of themselves. It's an ideal world where crime, pain, fear and consequences don't exist. When the first murder in years jolts this utopia, FBI agent Greer discovers a vast conspiracy behind the surrogate phenomenon and must abandon his own surrogate, risking his life to unravel the mystery.

Scene 1

Agent Peters (P): Mr. Steinberg? Seth Steinberg? Hello.

Seth Steinberg (S): Sorry. I was in the can.

P: It's Agent Peters with the FBI.

S: Really?

P: You know with any chip this damaged ... Every circuit must have fired off at once.

S: Kablooeey! (1)

P: Have you ever seen anything like this before?

S: Last week a truckload of GI Joes did come back for reconditioning. And a couple of the Surries were missing optics.

P: Mind if we take a look at them?

S: Here we go.

P: No bullet holes? No blast damage? No scratches. No dirt. No mud. Mind if I check out the identity chip?

Scene 2

A party man (P): Hey, Maggie?

Maggie (M): No, thank you.

P: Come on ... it'll take the edge off (2).

M: Tom? Honey? I thought you were still in the hospital?

Tom Greer (G): Yeah ... I can see that.

M: What happened? Tom, I don't want you going out without your Surrie ever again.

G: You look very nice, Sexy.

M: OK ... Don't start. I'm sorry, those guys. They're friends of Brigettes, she brought them over, she wanted to go to this party ... I didn't even want to go.

G: How long have you been jacking?

M: I don't. I don't do it, Tom. And what does it matter if I did? Why are you being like this?

G: Okay, go have a good time.

M: Tom, what was that? What you want from me?

G: I want you ... My wife.

M: I am your wife.

G: No. God. You're not. Not this ... thing ... I just want you. And I want the woman that's in that room.

M: Things have changed, Tom.

G: You're ... No, you've changed. You're just scared.

Scene 3

Agent in the office (A): Hey, Tom. I thought you were on leave (3)?

Tom Greer (G): Oh yeah ... I am. Actually I was just suspended. Another investigation, I'll just clear my desk out (4).

A: You should be home. Recuperating, OK?

G: Not walking around here in the flesh. I was

at home then I came here to clean out my desk. And you know ... before the medication kicks in (5) ... Hopefully ... I can find a box ...

Stone (S): Why don't you come into my office, you're not looking too sharp (6).

G: It's a good move for you. It's a really good group over there. Smart. Talented. Great legal department. Great working environment. You gotta be happy with those first-year stock options, huh?

S: What are you talkin' about?

G: Myles Strickland, the guy I was chasing ... The guy you hired to kill Canter.

S: Tom you got it all wrong.

G: You gave him the weapon. VSI makes them. They give one to you, you give it to Strickland so he can go out and kill Canter. The only problem is, he killed his son by mistake.

S: Something is wrong with you.

G: Why are you doing this? Money? Is that what it is?

S: You need help.

Scene 4

Doctor Canter (C): Hello Tom. Nice to finally meet you, in the flesh (7). Now, lie on the floor, face down. It's a little different when you have to kill somebody with your own hands. You're going to have to squeeze the trigger. You don't have a machine to do your dirty work. Feel that? An accelerated pulse, the heightened awareness ... Savoring each breath as if it were your last. That what you've been missing. That's what everybody's been missing.

Tom Greer (G): So you kill millions of people?

C: I changed the course of human history when I invented surrogates. Now I'm going to change it back.

G: You can't change what's been done. You and I know that better than most people.

C: My son's death will not have been in vain. Not if it heals mankind.

G: Heals mankind? That what you want to do? You want to kill everyone?

C: And that's going to heal mankind? They're already dead. They died the minute they plugged into those machines.

G: This is not the solution. That's the way it is!

C: I had a vision. I was going to empower the powerless, to enable other like me to walk, to feel, to live a normal life.

G: Listen to me! They're going to call you a murderer! That is what you're doing!

C: Surrogacy is a perversion. It's an addiction. And you have to kill the addict to kill the addiction. You're too late. What I've done can't be stopped. Now you're going to be witness to the rebirth of humanity. That's my gift to you.

Vocabulary

- 1. kablooeey:** onomatopoeia for something blowing apart
- 2. take edge off:** to relax
- 3. on leave:** absent with permission from work or duty
- 4. clear out:** to pack up and take away
- 5. kick in:** to take effect
- 6. look sharp:** to be outstanding and eye catching
- 7. in the flesh:** appearing in person, in this movie it means without one's surrogate

(By Huang Daohen)

